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THE WORKS OF

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

Library Edition

VOLUME III

TEN TIMES ONE IS TEN
AND OTHER STORIES

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Ten Times One is Ten

and

Other Stories

BY

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

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LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1910

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Preface

THE story of "Ten Times One" and the other sketches and stories in this volume belong together. The reader will find in its place the briefest possible account of the life of Frederic William Greenleaf, the Harry Wadsworth of that book.

With no expectation of mine, the parable of the story took form immediately in actual life. Miss Ella Elizabeth Russell, of New York, in the end of May, 1870, read this story to a class of boys whom she met every Sunday, in a Sunday School. They were of different ages from thirteen to seventeen. She writes of them, "they felt that they were too old to go to any Mission School, but the idea of a Club to meet Sunday afternoons seemed a more grown-up affair. I had read them the story of Harry Wadsworth and as the class was ten in number, they decided to call themselves the Harry Wadsworth Helpers, to adopt the "Four Mottoes" and to see what they could do to "lend a hand."

"The boys now are men, and though widely scattered are nearly all doing well. Only yesterday I received a letter from one who has been for several years in the Black Hills."

I need not say that I was greatly interested when I heard from Miss Russell that the suggestion of the book had taken concrete form: but I had never thought of this in writing it. As the reader will see if he will turn to the introduction of the first edition of the story, I was simply trying, in an "invented example," to show to young people the extent and the rapidity by which the effort of one man extends itself in larger and larger circles if he really looks out and not in and is determined to lend a hand. But some who read were more ready than I had supposed any one would be to try the experiment. The nine people who were at that time nearest to me in the work of life were fond of calling themselves, with me, the "ORIGINAL TEN," and I was proud that they were. I like to name them here. They were my wife; my brother Nathan; Caroline Letitia Tallant, whom the reader will find named as Irene in the story called "Neither Scrip nor Money"; John Williams, at that time the assistant minister of our church; Helen Frances Kimball; Benjamin Kimball, to whose suggestion, more than once repeated, the writing of the story was due; Martha H. Brooks; Edward Hale Greenleaf, the son of Harry Wadsworth; and my daughter, Ellen Day Hale. If we had the original manuscript of the book I suppose we should find the handwriting of each of these ladies, all of whom worked with me in my study, in the charities of the church, or in other ways. The gentlemen also, in one way or another, in the Sunday School,

or in the administration of charity were all mixed up with the evolution of the story.

The earliest letters in the letter-book of "Ten Times One" are from "H. H.," Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson, who wrote from Bethlehem on Nov. 10, 1870; Mr. Thomas A. Janvier; Mr. Edward Tompkins, of Oakland, California; Mr. Charles J. Woodbury, of Chattanooga, Tennessee; Mrs. Laura Winthrop Johnson, of West Brighton, Staten Island; Mr. William R. Cooper, of Philadelphia; Mr. R. R. Bowker, then of the "New York Evening Mail"; Miss G. A. Alden, of Wartrace, Tennessee; Rev. Loammi Goodnow Ware, of Burlington, Vermont. Of these, with Miss Russell, we have been accustomed to speak as "the First Ten."

In the beginning of 1871 I had a list of some fifty persons, in different parts of the world, who called themselves, more or less definitely, "Harry Wadsworth people." Every two or three months, perhaps, from that time, for several years, I would get a letter from one or another of them, perhaps asking advice for the formation of a club, perhaps sending me an anecdote of some act of heroism or help. In answer to questions about the forming of clubs, I have always said that the less "fuss and feathers" the better; that all the idea I had of a Wadsworth Club was, that it should be made of unselfish people, who met, not for "mutual improvement," but with some definite plans for other people.

I know not why, but this book, "Ten Times

One is Ten," very soon had an *entrée* into prisons. I have, I suppose, a dozen letters from different sources, telling me of the pleasure prisoners have taken in it. One of the clubs was one of young ladies who have circulated it, in large numbers, in prisons.

I think the Ten Times One club of Westfield, Massachusetts, was the largest of these organizations. But in 1874, Miss Mary A. Lathbury, without then having seen the book which the reader has in his hands, proposed the establishment of the Look-Up Legion, with the four mottoes, which she had seen on the frieze of a friend's parlor in Orange. This Legion extended through five hundred or more Sunday-schools.

As early as 1881, this body of the Look-Up Legion held its first annual meeting, at Chautauqua. Clubs from all parts of the country were represented there, and for mutual help they organized a system of circular letters, to be printed monthly in Boston. These letters were published under the oversight of the Welcome and Correspondence Club, a club existing in the South Congregational Church, and under my personal lead.

After this publication began, we began to hear at our office from clubs in different parts of the world. Sometimes we were taken by surprise because interest in the matter seemed to have broken out in quarters where we could not trace the origin. From that day to this, such has been the experience of what we have learned to call the

Central Office. A club will exist for a few years, and then will cease to be. When it ceases to be it does not send a letter to anybody to say that it has ceased to be. Or, on the other hand, a club will spring into existence; it does the work that it has to do in its neighborhood; but it does not occur to anybody that it will be an advantage to people in other neighborhoods to know what its work is, what are its failures, or what are its successes.

The circular letters alluded to were continued through the years 1882 and 1883. They were discontinued for the years 1884–5; but the necessity for some such means of communication pressed upon us, and in 1886 the journal called "Lend a Hand" was organized. Before that time, the clubs had representatives in all the quarters of the globe. As these different clubs or societies have succeeded in achieving any special work, they have been apt to form their own centres and establish their own working offices. Thus the King's Daughters and the Epworth League have their own offices and journals.

In 1897 the journal "Lend a Hand" was merged in the "Charities Review"; and our own club work was taken up by the "Lend a Hand Record," which is still published at our central office in Boston.

This office began with such work of public spirit as the united clubs liked to carry on together. A hospital for colored people in Mont-

gomery, Alabama, was the first institution where they thus united for general work outside their own specific plans. This was in the year 1890. Since that time similar enterprises in the Southern states, — notably the relief of the sufferers by the typhoon of 1893, and the maintenance of the school of Manassas, — have been objects of the united work of the American clubs, — and, more lately, enterprises which seemed needed in Europe and Africa; in the care of soldiers in the Spanish war; and now in the "Peace Crusade."

For such purposes these clubs are united under a charter, as the "Lend a Hand Society," with an office in Boston. It should be understood that the several societies carry on their independent work without interference from this centre. But their united work is maintained by the united management. For the various purposes of its union it received and expended last year about twenty-five thousand dollars.

Almost all the clubs are in the United States. But we have correspondents in England and Continental Europe, —in Liberia and Johannesburg in Africa, — in Poona and Tien Tsin and Van and other parts of Asia Minor in Asia, — and a few in the islands of the Pacific. Our Westfield club printed the translation of "Peep o' Day" which is now read under the title of "Rantak" in the Caroline Islands. (Philologists will observe how "Peep o' Day — "Oriente" — became *Rant*ak.) We have therefore our voices in this group of the Antipodes.

The literature of "Ten Times One" has extended itself in other directions. "Mrs. Merriam's Scholars" illustrates the work of the mottoes in the lives of some of her school-girls. The stories in that book are drawn from experiences of Northern teachers in the Civil War. "Four and Five" is a story of boys, also studied from fact. In the volume in the reader's hands will be found the memorial of Caroline Letitia Tallant, which has been referred to in the story "Neither Scrip nor Money," — and some true stories of hospital life in "Stand and Wait." The Civil War gave inexhaustible material for story-tellers in the lives of self-sacrifice of those who enlisted for every duty of a great struggle, which called to the Front every man and woman who sought the triumph of Truth, Justice, and Freedom.

EDWARD E. HALE.

ROXBURY, MASS., June 17, 1899.

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TEN TIMES ONE IS TEN

Ten Times One is Ten

CHAPTER I

WHAT HAPPENED

I SUPPOSE it was the strangest Club that ever came into being.

There were these ten members I tell you of. And they have never met but this once, nor do I believe they will ever meet again.

They met in the railroad station at North Colchester, waiting for the express train. The express train, if you happen to remember that particular afternoon and evening, was five hours and twenty minutes behind time. They knew it was behind time, but they had nowhere else to go, and it was then and there that the club was formed.

For they had all come together at Harry Wadsworth's funeral. The most manly and most womanly fellow, he, whom I ever knew; the merriest and the freshest, and the bravest and the wisest; the most sympathizing when people were sorry, and the most sympathizing when they were glad. Thunder! If I were at home, and could

just show you three or four of Harry's yellow letters that lie there, then you would know something about him. Simply, he was the most spirited man who ever stumbled over me; he was possessed, and possessed with a true spirit, — that was what he was; and so he had guns enough, and more than guns enough, for any emergency.

And Harry Wadsworth had died. And from north, and east, and south, we ten there had come to the funeral. And we were waiting for the train, as I said, and that is the way the Club was born. Then and there it had its first meeting, and, as I say, its last, most likely.

Bridget Corcoran may strictly be called the founder of the Club, unless dear Harry himself was. For Bridget Corcoran was the first person that said anything. I never can sit still very long at a time at such places. And I had sat in my chair by that overfilled stove, in that stifling room, as long as I could stand it, and a good deal longer, none of us saying anything. Then I had gone out and walked the platform, brooding till it seemed to me that anything was better than walking the platform. Then I went in again to find the air just as dead and stived and insupportable as it was before. And this time I left the door open and walked across to the back window, which looked on a different wood-pile from the wood-pile the front window looked upon. I need not say that the only variety in our prospects was in our choice of wood-piles; but we could look at

the ends of sticks, or at the sides of them, as we preferred.

I walked to the back window, and began looking at the back wood-pile.

"You knew Mr. Wadsworth," said Bridget Corcoran, timidly. And it was a comfort to me.

"Knew him!" said I; "I did not know anybody else!"

"I like to tell you about him then," said she, with her pleasant Irish accent. "I like to tell every one about him. For, save for him, I do not know where I should be this day; and I do know where my boy Will would be."

"How is that?" I asked, roused up a little by her sympathy.

"Will, sir, would be in the State's Prison save for him you carried to the grave this day; and for me, I think I should have died of a broken heart. You know, your reverence, that in the charge of the freight station, when he was first appointed here, it was for him to say who should have the chips, and who should not have them. And he was so good — as he always was — as to give me the second right in the wood-yard; Mary Morris always having the first, because her husband, who is now switch-tender, lost his arm in the great smash-up come Michaelmas five years gone by. He gave me the second right, I say, and though I say it who should not, I never abused my privilege, and he knew I never did, your reverence, as how could I, when he was always so kind, and often

called me into his office, and always spoke to me as kindly as if I was a born lady, as indeed he was a born gentleman."

Ah me! if I only could go on and tell Bridget's story as she told it herself, with the thousand pretty praises of dear Harry, you would better understand what manner of man he was, and how the Club was born. But there is no time for that, and this was the story shortly. Harry saw one day that her eyes were red, as she passed him, and he would not rest till he had called her into the office and found why; and the why was, that her boy Will had "hooked jack," as the youngster said, — had played truant, and had done it now for many weeks in order, and had done it with Tidd boys, and the Donegals, sons of perdition as they always seemed, and nothing Bridget could say or do would put Will in any better way. Then was it that Harry sent for the little rascal, "talked to him," she said; but I knew Harry well enough to know what the talking was. He took the boy up country with him one day, when he was making a contract for some wood. He stopped, as they came back, at a trout stream, and bade the little scamp try some of the best hooks from his book. He sent him home after such a glimpse of a decent boy's pleasures as nobody ever had shown poor Will before. He sent for him the next day, and told him he wanted him in the office. He dressed the child in new clothes from head to foot. He made him respect himself

in forty ways you or I would never have thought of. Before three weeks were gone, Will was ashamed of his bad handwriting. Before four weeks were gone, he was ashamed of his old company; in a fortnight more, he was the steadiest scholar in the "Commercial College" of the place. Before three months were over, he came to Harry with some lame duck of a Tidd boy whom he had lured out of some quagmire or other. And the upshot of it was, that at this moment Will was as decent a boy as there was in the country ; while, but for Harry, he had as fair chance as any of them to be hanged. That, severely condensed, was Bridget Corcoran's story.

Now, I have no idea of telling how Harry had come to be the star of my worship, — worship which was not idolatry. Talking here at the head of the regiment, how do I know who might overhear me, and this is no story to get into the newspapers. But, while I was reflecting that Harry had rescued poor Will from one set of devils, and me from devils of quite another color, Caroline Leslie looked up ; she had joined Bridget and me by the window.

"Do you mean the Caroline Leslie that gives the bird the lump of sugar in Chalon's picture?"

"Why, yes! that same Caroline Leslie. Did you know her?" She looked up. She thanked Bridget very cordially. "I thank you ever so much for telling me that. It has comforted me more than anything to-day. Will you not come and see me some time in Worcester? You will

find me in 907. Summer Street. Let me write it down for you." So Bridget was pleased. And then Caroline got up and asked me to walk, and took my arm, and we walked the platform together; and she told me what Harry had been to her. How, only three years before, when he first came to Colchester, or to that village, how her brother Edward brought him home and made her mother say he might board there. How her mother said it was impossible, but consented the moment she saw Harry, when he only came in to tea. How she, Caroline, was a goose and a fool, and a dolt and good-for-nothing, when he moved into that house. And how the mere presence of that man in that family — or was it his books, or was it the people that came to see him — had changed the whole direction of her life, as an arrow's direction is changed when it glances on the side of a temple. Now, Caroline Leslie was no more in love with Harry than you are. Pretty girl, she had her own lover, and I knew she had. And he, far away across the sea, would shed tears as bitter as hers of that day, when he knew he was never to see Harry's face again.

But we were only three of the Club — Caroline, Bridget, and I. Count Will Corcoran for four if you like. If you count him the Club is eleven.

But what I tell you will give you an idea. For as soon as we got talking, the bakers and the baked by the stove got talking; all telling much the same kind of story, how dear Harry had been

a new life to them. Widdifield, who you would have said had no sentiment, quiet Mrs. Emerson, Mary Merriam, and her brother John, and even Will Morton. I must not try to tell the stories, though I could, every one. We all drew together at last, when something Morton said drew out George Dutton to "state his experience."

"Wadsworth and I," said he, "went out in one of those first California colonies, — when the mutual system was tried in all sorts of ways, and people thought the kingdom of heaven was coming because they all put two hundred dollars apiece into a joint-stock company. On the voyage I did not see him much, and I know I did not like him. How strange that seems now! For there was no reason under heaven why I should not have found him out at the very first moment; and now it seems as if I lost so much in losing all the chance of those five months. Well, I lost it — for better or worse. We came to California, and the colony all broke up into forty thousand pieces. Little enough sticking by each other there! Each man for himself; and as always happens on that theory, the devil for us all, with a vengeance!

"I roughed through everything. Got a little dust now and then, and spent it a great deal faster than I got it. I have paid one hundred and eighty-six dollars in gold for a pair of miner's boots — and they were good boots — when I had not a rag beside to put upon my feet. At last I thought my lucky time had come. We were up

in what they then called the Cottonwood Reach, and a very good company of us had struck some very decent diggings, and had laid off our claims with something like precision, and order, and decency. Wadsworth, as I happened to know, was with some men who had got hold of a water-privilege three or four miles above us. Some of our men had been up to see about buying some water from him, and said he was quite a king in that country. But I had not seen him.

"Then there came in on us, just as we got well established, a lot of roughs, blacklegs, and rowdies of every nation and color under heaven. They wanted our claims; we all knew that well enough. And they hung round, as such devils as they will, trying all sort of ways to get a corner of the wedge in. We were a pretty decent set; and none of our boys really liked them, but we were as civil as we could be. Some of the fellows were fools enough to lose dust to them, and I never heard that any of them won any. They pretended to stake off some claims of their own, but they never worked any of any account. They drank their whisky, and put up tents and shanties for gambling; and swaggered round among the rest of us, and said they knew better ways for washing than we did; and so on. All the time we all knew that something was brewing, while they were about. And sure enough, at last it came.

"Watrous and Flanegan, who were a sort of selectmen to us, had to go down to Agnes City

with some gold, and to buy some pork. And they took with them two or three of the best fellows we had. Watrous came to me the last thing, and said, 'Don't you get into a quarrel with these greasers,' for he knew I hated them. But, Mr. Ingham, a saint in heaven would have quarrelled with those men. It all began about a shovel. One of these blackguards came up to me to borrow a shovel, and I let him have it. Then he came back for another, and I let him have that. Then came up three of them and wanted three shovels, and, to make a long story short, we came to words — they and I. They had come up for a fight; and they got it. At last, one of the most noisy of them — to give him his due, he was half drunk — drew his revolver and snapped it at me. Lucky for me it missed fire, and in very short metre I hit him over the head with the crowbar I was using. Oh, what a howl they made! They dashed at me, and I ran. The first of them tripped and fell, which stopped the others a half second. And then the whole tribe of them, who had been watching the affair, came running after me, yelling and howling like so many wolves."

By this time, as I said, Dutton had the whole group in the station round him.

"Did you ever run for your life?" said he, with a funny twinkle of the eye. "I tell you that to put in the best stride you know, and to clear every log, and take no help at any ditch, but just to run, run, run, run, — half a mile, — three quarters,

— and a mile, — to feel your heart up in your throat, your lungs pumping, and pumping nothing, — while you just run, run, run, — and know that one false step is death; — I tell you that is what a man remembers. That was the way I ran. I dared not look back. I knew I was well ahead of all but one man. But I could hear his steady step, step, step, step, — just in the time of mine. Was he taller than I, or shorter? I dared not look round and see. But I knew his stride depended on that. He was gaining nothing on me in time; was he gaining in length of pace?

"Where was I running to? Why, to our poor little shanty, where I had left George Orcutt lame in bed. What safety would that be? These devils could tear it down in thirty seconds. I did not know, but I ran!

"I ran — with the one man close behind, and the others yelling farther back. He did not yell. He saved his breath for running. But he did not catch me. I flung the door open. I crowded down the latch. I stuck a domino from the table in between the latch and the latch-guard, and with this as my poor fortress, I flung myself on the floor. The man dashed up after me, but did not so much as try the door!

"An instant showed why; for in ten seconds the wolves, as they seemed, were howling round him. Then the man, whoever he was, said, 'The first man that steps on this plank is a dead man! There's been enough of this bullying! Dirty

Dick, take care you are not seen again in this county. I give you six hours to be gone! Chip and Leathers, you had best go with him, or without him. Your room is better than your company. I will have the sheriff here by night, and we will see what sort of men are going to jump claims on this creek. You fellow with the red beard, who ran away from Angeles, there's a warrant out against you. Understand, all of you, that this game is played about through.'

"Who was this celestial visitant? Orcutt and I listened in amazement. Was this the way Raphael addressed the rebellious spirits when Milton was not at hand? Anyway, they answered much as the rebellious spirit would have done. Some swore, some laughed, other some, on the outside, turned round and vamosed. So Orcutt told me, whose eye was at a knot-hole. The celestial visitant said not a word more. But in five minutes the whole crew of them was gone.

"Then I unlatched the door. Raphael came in, and was — Harry Wadsworth! Yes; that light, frail fellow, whom we carried so easily to-day, was the man who looked those beggars in the eye that day, and saved my life for me!

"That was the beginning with me, and there are few things he and I have not done together since that. We have slept under the same blanket, and starved on the same trail. And if any man ever taught me anything, that dear fellow taught me all of life I know that is worth knowing."

These were the sort of stories we got telling in the station-house, and it was out of such talk that the project of the Club grew. We had not known each other before, but here was one tie we all had together. Could we not then recognize it, by some sort of gathering or correspondence, or union? Natural enough to propose, but you see, of course, what followed.

First, Widdifield, as good a fellow as lives, but set, or as the vernacular says, "sot" in his ways, liked the idea of a Club very much; but thought we must appoint a committee to draw up some little mutual covenant or expression of principles which all the members would willingly agree to. "Something, you know, to give us a little substance." Will Morton did not care so much for any statement of principles, but thought there had better be a constitution made. If he had not changed his coat, he should have had in his pocket the constitution of the Philirenean, which would, perhaps, have served as a good model. Mary Merriam did not care about any constitution, but thought the society ought to have a name that everybody would understand. Poor Bridget Corcoran did not take in much of all this, but hated clubs. The Shamrock Club, that her husband had belonged to, had worked all his woe. So one thought this, and another said that, and the thing happens, which, so far as I know, always happens, even when ten of the simplest-minded people in the world meet together with any common pur-

pose. There has to be a certain fixed amount of talk, — what Haliburton calls the "talkee-talkee stage." It corresponds to the fizz of common air when you open a gas-pipe for the first time. It blows out your match, and you have to wait some little while before anything arrives that will burn.

One of the Wise Men of the East — was it Louis Agassiz? — said, when he first came here, that one of the amazing things which he found in America was, that no set of men could get together to do anything, though there were but five of them, unless they first "drew up a constitution." If ten men of botany met in a hotel in Switzerland to hear a paper on the habits of Tellia Gulielmensis, they sat down and heard it. But if nine men of botany here meet to hear a paper read on Shermania Rogeriana, they have to spend the first day, first in a temporary organization, then in appointing a committee to draw a constitution, then in correcting the draft made by them, then in appointing a committee to nominate officers, and then in choosing a president, vice-president, two secretaries, and a treasurer. This takes all the first day. If any of these people are fools enough, or wise enough ("persistent" is the modern word) to come a second time, all will be well, and they will hear about the Shermania.

This was the little delay which killed our little Club at the moment of its birth, if, indeed, it were killed or were born. With regard to that there is a doubt, as you fellows will find out, if we should

ever get back to this story again. But, to tell the whole truth, we spent the rest of our five hours discussing the covenant, the name, and the constitution of our little society; and when, at last, we heard the scream of the express, and saw its light, we were further from the organization than ever. Everybody looked for scrip and staff (carpet-bag and cane); everybody seized his coat or his shawl; and poor Widdifield and Morton were just heard pleading for a committee to draw up a constitution, or "just a little formula, you know," when the train stopped, and we stowed away as we could, in the separate cars.

For all that, however, these people loved Harry with their hearts' love; and not one of them meant to fail in the impulse he had given; no, nor ever did fail. And though, as I said, the Club never met again, and never can, perhaps it has existed to as much purpose. After the train was under way, I passed along from car to car, and asked each of them if he would not write me some day, if anything turned up which brought Harry to his mind, or which would have pleased him.

Everybody said "Yes." And what is more, everybody has done as he said. So I have this mass of letters you saw in my desk, marked "Harry Wadsworth;" and it is that mass of letters which gives me the material for the really curious story, or stories, I am going to tell you.

If you will come round to my tent after the parade is over, I will show you some of them.

CHAPTER II

NEXT TO THAT

THE men did not come up to my tent, regimental headquarters, that night. We were on our way up after the parade, when pop, pop, some red-shirted pickets cracked off their rifles, frightened by some goats, I believe; for all this happened in one of the Calabrian valleys. The companies were filing off to supper, as the shots were heard, but halted promptly enough; and, in a minute more, we were brought back to parade again. I ordered some kettles of polenta brought down for the men to eat, and we lounged and lay there, waiting orders for a couple of hours. Then it was clear enough that the whole was a false alarm, and I let them go to bed.

But a week or two after, Dalrymple, who had made a good deal of fun of the club, came round, and Frank Chaney with him. Dalrymple knew that I would not have any nonsense about it, and indeed, he was quite in earnest himself when he asked me to bring out the papers and tell them more about the Club and its history. I told him what I tell you, that there was no history; there were only these letters, nine of them as it happened, folded together and marked "Harry Wadsworth." An odd-looking set they were. A letter from my wife Polly, written exactly on the third anniversary

of Harry's funeral; letters of all sizes and shapes written on tappa, brown paper, white paper, all sorts of paper; stained, faded, and broken at the edges, but all of them telling of the lives that these nine of the original Club had been leading. Indeed, when we came to look at the dates, they were all written within a month of that same anniversary of the day which we wasted together in the station-house, called *deepo*, at North Colchester.

The letters were: —

A. Dictated by Biddy Corcoran to her son Will, and in the most elegant of clerkly handwriting, down strokes hard and up strokes fine, I assure you.

B. Caroline Leslie's — she had not changed her name in marrying her cousin Harry, the same who gave her the canary-bird. She wrote from Cronstadt, Maine.

C. George Dutton, written as above, on tappa cloth from one of the Kermadeck Islands, in the South Pacific.

D. Mrs. Merriam, — quiet, long, dry letter from 14 Albion Street, Brooklyn.

E. As above, Polly Ingham's to me, when I was very far off soundings.

F. Widdifield's — he had accepted a place as professor in Clinton College, Kentucky.

G. Will Morton's — he was clerk of court in Ethan County, Vermont; always has been clerk of court, as his father was before him, and as his son will be after him.

H. John Merriam's — bookkeeper he, with Pettingill & Fairbanks, Chicago.

I. From Mrs. Emerson — head of a girls' boarding-school in Fernandina, Florida. And I had filed, in the same pile, a little paper of memoranda of my own. So there were really the autographs of all, save Mrs. Corcoran, of the ten of the Club which tried vainly to form itself at North Colchester.

Ah! what a pity it is that I may not print all these letters, now and here. If only I, Frederic Ingham, could be the editor of a monthly magazine of my own! If only I had 85,555 readers, on the moderate estimate of five readers to each copy sold, and they were all so prejudiced in favor of the Old as to like to read old letters, and yet so tolerant of the New as to be willing to read my speculations upon them. Then what a title-page could I not make up from these letters alone for the whole of a number, giving a courteous refusal to all "eminent contributors," and all good assistants not quite so eminent.

To make our "Contents on cover": —

Biddy Corcoran's Home. *By herself.*
Life by the Furnace.
The Kermadeck Islands.
Housekeeping. *By a Connoisseur.*
Polly to Fred.
Recollections. *Professor Widdifield.*
Three Years of Life. *W. Morton.*
The West as I saw it. *By a Big Boy.*

A New Boarding School. *Mrs. Emerson.*
10 × 10 = 100. *Fred. Ingham.*

There, is not that a good title-page for the outside of your new magazine? Would not that make Mr. Horace's mouth water, as he drew up his advertisement? Would not those running-titles be attractive as men opened the uncut pages? If! ah, if only I might myself control these MSS. "It must not be, this giddy trance." I must confine myself to the probable restrictions. "Five thousand words, or at the outside, five thousand five hundred for a single number." These are the hated limits in which I live and move and have my hampered being. Is there not some worthless epithet above which I can strike out! Ah, no! better omit all Will Corcoran's commercial college chirography in one lump, and come without preface to pretty Caroline Leslie.

CAROLINE LESLIE'S LETTER (B)

It is so queer to see where people will turn up when you least expect it. Now Caroline Leslie, since the funeral, had married her cousin Harry, the same, as I said, who gave her the canary-bird; and he had taken her down to the iron-works at Cronstadt, in Piscataquis County. Pretty girl, how little she thought, when she was giving the canary-bird his sugar, that she was to spend five years of her life in a house just one

grade above a log-cabin, with two rooms on the ground floor, and a bed in her parlor, and — which was perhaps the only part of it amiss — that all her friends in Worcester were to be saying that it was "so fortunate" that her husband had such a good position! Good position it was, for all the bed in the parlor. For there Caroline and Harry first subdued the world; there were her first three children born; and there, as the letter showed, she also had done her share of Harry Wadsworth's work, in Harry Wadsworth's way.

When they went down there, it was chaos come again, I can tell you! An old iron-furnace, which had been built in the most shiftless and careless way, had made for a year or less some iron of the worst quality, so that the reputation of the ore was all lost, and had then been left to burn out. A new company, with some capital from Ibbotsons or Tubals, or some sort of foreign iron people, had gone in, and had sent down George Landrin, who knew something about making iron, to redeem the reputation of the place, and Harry Leslie to be treasurer and manager as far as George Landrin was not. Instantly, as I need not say, Harry Leslie and Caroline Leslie were married. That was the first link that the new iron company forged, and they forged it without knowing that they did so, by appointing him assistant treasurer, with a salary of fifteen hundred a year. They were married, went to

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Cronstadt in the first wagon after the roads were in any sort opened, and lived there, thirteen miles from the next town, in a village of iron men; theirs one of three framed houses — all, as I said, one grade above a log-cabin.

"Hajj any ssiety thar?" said Mrs. Grundy to Caroline one day when I met Caroline at her father's, where she had come up to Thanksgiving. How Caroline's eyes snapped and flashed fire!

"The best society, Mrs. Grundy, I ever knew." And so it was, indeed, thanks to Leslie, and Landrin, and Harry Wadsworth, and the founder of all good society, the saviour of all such holes as they found Cronstadt, whose notions in this matter Harry Wadsworth and these fellows had had the wit and heart to follow.

Here is the letter: —

CRONSTADT, November 7.

DEAR MRS. INGHAM, — I have never forgotten that, as we came home from Mr. Wadsworth's funeral, I promised your husband I would some day write to you about him. And though I have put it off so long, I have always meant to do it. But you know how time goes by without our putting pen to paper. It was three years ago that we all met there together. I cannot believe it.

But to-night I am going to write to you, for I do not know where your husband is, and he must take this as a letter to him. For I have been thinking of Mr. Wadsworth all day; I think of him, and of things he

used to say and do, a great deal now we are here in this new life, and I have to try so many experiments, and do so many things for the first time. To-day is Sunday, and on Sundays I see the working-men here even more than I do on other days, and they are more disposed to talk, or perhaps I am. Harry has been gone for nearly a week now, and will not be back till next Saturday, so Mr. Landrin and I and Sarah had to manage about the tunes and singing as we best could last night. But to-day we had stalwart help, and I wish you had been here to see and hear our choir. We still meet for service, as we did when you were here, in the upper carpenter's shop, but yesterday Sarah and Eunice drove the men out just before dark, and began to dress the two chests which make the pulpit, with colored leaves, and this morning they completed their decoration, and made quite a brilliant show. Joe Deberry, that French charcoal man who got you the Lycopodium, was very efficient and sympathetic. Mr. Landrin played the flute; Will Wattles read part of a sermon out of the "Independent;" dear old Mr. Mitchell "led in prayer," and we really had a good time — I did, and we all did.

When we sat round talking, on the boards and the benches, and a good many outside in the sun, I attacked old Mrs. Follett, and won her heart by asking her how I could dye some yarn I have here. She has always been a little shy of me, but she got talking about this place as it was in the old dynasty.

"It was hell, Mrs. Leslie! I beg your pardon, but it was just hell and nothing else." And really, I believe it was. When she told me of the drinking and gambling and fighting of men, and fighting of dogs, and of

cocks, and of hens and women, I believe — of everything really that could fight, — why, Mrs. Ingham, when she told me about what her own husband was, who is now as nice a man as there is in the shop, and what a life she led with him, I wondered whether this were the same world. She thought Mr. Landrin and Harry had done a great deal more than they have. I am sure all we could do here is very little. But Harry has put his foot down, and Mr. Landrin has been very willing to help; and they have said that if they and their wives were here, it should be a decent place to live in; and when I see how happy and pleasant the people are, and when I think how little I used to know about such places and people at all, I thank God for bringing me here.

All the singers have been up here to-night practising. I wish you knew them all as well as you learned to know Sarah and George Fordyce when you were here. There are some of them who have just that sort of passion for my Harry that your husband has for Harry Wadsworth. But when they talk to Mr. Leslie about what he has done for the place, he laughs, and points at Harry Wadsworth's picture, and says, "Don't thank me — thank him." Well, to-night ten of them came round to sing, and before we began they produced a beautiful frame for Harry's picture, and asked me to let them put it in, for a surprise to my husband when he comes home. Then they began to talk to me about him, and I told them — well, you know what I told them. And I could see the tears roll down George Fordyce's face as I talked to them. And when they went away, he said, "We have never known what to call this

choir class. I move it be called the Harry Wadsworth Club." And they all clapped their hands and said it should be so. So after all, you see, your husband's club is born.

But I must stop. I hear Wally crying in the other room — and you know I am my own nurse now.

Give my love to Mr. Ingham when you write. Always, dear Mrs. Ingham,

Your own

CAROLINE LESLIE.

I like that letter; I like that woman; I like that place, Cronstadt; and I like the life they lead there. But I should not have filed that letter, and carried it to Italy and Sicily with me, if the others that came about the same time had not belonged with it; so they all got tied up together. Try this: —

PROFESSOR WIDDIFIELD'S LETTER (F)

CLINTON COLLEGE, BOURBON COUNTY,
Kentucky, November, 10.

REV. F. INGHAM, ETC., ETC.: —

DEAR SIR, — In private conversation with a few of our young gentlemen here, I showed to them such of the letters of our dear Mr. Wadsworth as I have with me. They have been very much impressed by their spirit, freshness, and insight into true life. Do you see any impropriety in my printing privately, say a dozen copies for such of these friends of mine as I think might find advantage in them? And should you be disposed to add to them a copy of a letter you once

read to me, which Mr. Wadsworth wrote to you when he entered into the Fremont canvass so honestly?

Very truly,

Your obedient servant,

INCREASE WIDDIFIELD.

You say those two letters are exactly alike? Of course; they are all alike. This tappa-cloth letter is just like that glazed note-paper from Brooklyn. Want to hear tappa-cloth? It is not in New Zealandee. Here is the end of it: —

"It is not true that I am always in scrapes. You say so, I know; but I do live the steadiest, stupidest life of any eight-day clock of them all. Only you do not hear of that. It is only when I am dragged out of the water by the hair of my head that I am put in the newspaper, or happen to mention the incident, and then you all say Dutton is always being dragged out of the water. This time it was not metaphorically.

"I had gone off in the *Monarch*, as she took our six months' collection of bêche-de-mer to see the last of her officers and to get them well outside the reef, and had with me my own canoe, and eight of these native boatmen. They are the best fellows in the world. See if you do not say so before I have done. I bade the Englishmen good-bye; they lay to while I jumped down into my boat; and we were off, and I started back for the Cannibal Islands, all my men paddling. Things looked a little grum when we started; there was just the beginning of a nasty Souther, and, to tell the truth, I stayed in the captain's cabin a little later than I meant to. But the men did not mind. I don't think they would mind if they had been in so many cocoa-nut shells with salt-

spoons to bale with. They just stretched to their paddling, begged the after man to see that I was warmly covered, and began chanting this missionary song, —

'Womar iti enaka bacha epoku.'

How well I came to know that refrain before I was asleep, and after! For I did fall asleep, and the first thing I knew George caught me by the leg, dragged me awake, and showed me that we had come to the breakers. The sun was down, but it was light enough, what with waves, and phosphorescence, and stars, to make the wildest sight that ever you or I looked upon. Ingham, the thing I thought of was the Cottonwood claims, and my run for my life, and Harry Wadsworth's appearing to the rescue. I knew it would all be over in two minutes. But I spoke cheerily to the men; said 'All right,' which is one of their favorite words, had that strange feeling come over me, which I dare say you have felt, when one looks death right in the face — the feeling, 'Now I shall know;' nodded to George, who calls himself in their pretty way, 'nia-keiki,' which means foster-brother, and said, 'God bless you' to him, and the next second we were under twenty feet of water. Nobody but madmen would have expected to cross that reef with that gale blowing!

"Of course I came to the surface, and of course the curlers swung me over the coral in less than no time! If only they did not swing me upon the next ledge in lesser yet! I could not hold out five minutes in that swirl and spray, and I knew I could not. But before I had time to think much about it; before I had even a chance to clear the water from my eyes to try to see

about it, a strong wiry hand had me under the armpit, and I heard George's gentle voice say, 'All right,' and then in their own language he went on to tell me not to be frightened. I was frightened, for the first time, for I thought I knew the faithful fellow could do nothing for me, and I was afraid he would lose his own life trying to save mine. In much fewer words I told him so. But he said just as sweetly as before, 'If I die, you die; and if I live, you live.' And just then I began to see; and near us, in this hollow where we were, between two ridges of breakers, was another of these loving creatures, who said just the same thing, 'If I die, you die; if I live, you live.'

"Ingham, I believe the men saved me by saying that more than by all the wonderful things they did in the next half hour. It seemed to me that it would be so mean if I swamped them or sunk them, that I stuck to my work as I never would or could have done had I been alone. And they — the way they lifted, and pushed, and pulled — the way they towed me and shoved me, — if we ever meet, you will laugh yourself to death as I tell you, and yet it was no laughing matter then. All eight held together and held by clumsy, logy me. They understood each other by instinct, and they took me in as they would have taken in an upset canoe if they had found one floating in the offing.

"In half an hour I was lying on the beach here; these loving fellows were chafing me, and rubbing oil into me. I could not speak, but I was alive and in this world.

"And what do you suppose was the first thing they did the next morning. I was asleep, as you may imagine, but at sunrise every man of them went off in

the offing, which was calm enough now, to hunt up what was left of my boat and to bring her in. And when I scolded George for this, and told him the boat was not worth the risk, he said they knew I loved the boat; they knew I had named the boat 'Harry,' and that my Harry-boat was not to be lost if they could save her. Fred, that was the first time I broke down. I fairly cried at that. And ever since they have called themselves the 'Harry-boatmen.'"

You see it is as I said, they are all the same letter, only they are written by different hands, in different inks, on different sorts of paper.

Polly had tied them all up, as they came in, one after another, for six months, and labelled them "Harry Wadsworth," as you saw. Then one day as she went over them she was tempted to count up the people whom these ten letter-writers told of, as having got clew to our enthusiasm about him.

Here were Caroline Leslie's:—

Harry Wadsworth Club	10
Professor Widdifield's Sermons	12
George Dutton's Harry-boatmen	8
John Merriam's Set	7
Mrs. Emerson's "first class"	11
Biddy Corcoran, Will, the Tidd boys, and the Tidd boys' father and mother	8
Mrs. Merriam's Sewing Club for Newsboys	13
Polly's two children and the two servants, with Mrs. Standish	5
Will Morton and the Base-Ball Club at Ethan	19
And the men in my own watch, the old quartermaster and his son, and the others who messed with them, were	9

Polly counted them up. There were 103 in all. But Biddy Corcoran and Will Morton had been counted in the old Club of the station. "There are 101 new members," said Polly. "Ten times ten is a hundred. And it was only three years ago."

CHAPTER III

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

WELL! we reinstated King Victor Emanuel the Ugly on the throne of the Bourbons and of Murat. Then we returned to our respective homes: Garibaldi to his island, I to No. 9 in the third range, Frank Chaney to Scrooby, and Dalrymple to that truly English home in Norfolk, which nothing had driven him from but the unrest of an Englishman, — sure Io gad-fly, — *and* the desire of seeing Italy righted and Vittorio on the throne of Bourbon as above. In these respective spheres, as assigned to us, we subdued the world — and I, for my part, embarked in the manufacture of a new sphere and new world, of which no more at present.

Then was it that the parents of Dalrymple urged him to do his duty to the respectable Norman baron who founded his line, and "settle down." Then was it that Dalrymple, seeking for trout in a brook that ran through the ancestral

domain, met Mabel Harlakenden, the youngest daughter of a neighboring house. She was sitting on a mossy rock, her feet hidden in ferns, and reading "Coventry Patmore." Dalrymple and she had not met since he broke her father's window with a horse-chestnut on the day of her tenth birthday. Then was it that he introduced himself to her again, and fished no more that day, nor did she read any more. Three months after was it that in the parish church he gave her a ring. The minister took the ring and gave it to Dalrymple, and he then put it on the fourth finger of Mabel Harlakenden's left hand. Then he was taught by the minister. And then they all went home to Dalrymple's father's house to live there.

"Was she a descendant of Mabel Harlakenden of Kent?"

"Yes, she was. Why do you interrupt? That has nothing to do with the story, and your question took nine words."

Then Dalrymple proved to be less settled than ever. And it proved that Mabel liked travelling, if it were real travelling, just as much as he. She hated Paris; so did he. He hated Baden-Baden, — lucky for her, — so did she. He had fished all Norway; so had she. She had hob-nobbed with bandits in Calabria; so had he. Had she ever been to America? — "No, dearest, no!" Would she like to? He had a friend in America, who would put them through, — a man

who was with him in Calabria. There was nothing Mabel would like better. So instead of "settling down," as good Mr. Charles Dalrymple had expected, these young people, three months after marriage, took passage in the *Europa*, Captain Leitch, arrived in Boston, stopped at Parker's, took the evening boat to Hallowell, train next day to Skowhegan, and in two days more were laughing and talking at our table at No. 9, in the Third Range.

The prettiest English girl I ever saw was Mabel, — is Mabel, — let me say, as she is not here to frown. Dalrymple got his wooden bowl that time. No! I will not describe her. You should have asked him, if you wanted to know. And Mabel and he fished in our brooks, guided by my Alice and Paulina, who in their way were as good fishermen as he.

One night, as we sat together, Dalrymple said, "Will you show my wife those Wadsworth Papers?"

"Do show them to us, Mr. Ingham," said the pretty girl. "Horace has told me about them once and again, — they were the very first things I knew of you."

Well pleased, I produced the papers, and showed them all I have shown you, and more. Then we fell talking together about Harry, and the Leslies, and Dutton, and all these people; and Polly raked out more letters, which I have not pretended to show you, telling how they had

all fared in the three years which had gone by since she tied those nine or ten together. Then Dalrymple asked if, in America, people always shot apart from each other as all of us had done, — here was Harry, born in Maine, to die in Massachusetts; here was I, born in Connecticut, living in Maine; here was Dutton, born in Massachusetts, drowning off the Kermadeck Islands. Was it always so? And I told him the census would tell him that in 1860 there were near seven hundred thousand people in Iowa, where in 1850 there were not two hundred thousand; that the other five hundred thousand were born somewhere; and that the same year there were one hundred and twenty-six thousand people who had been born in Maine, who were living in other States, while only four times that number, men, women, and children who were born in Maine, were living there. I suppose that half the men and women had emigrated. "Happy country," cried Dalrymple, "where no man settles down!"

Then Mabel suggested to him that as they had no plan of travel, as it would be fatal if they should settle down in No. 9, as they seemed likely to do, he could have no better clue to follow in this labyrinth of States than the thread of the very letters he had in his hands. "You love Harry Wadsworth," she said, "as well as any one can who never saw him. I am sure I do." And her great blue eyes were full of tears. "Let us

go and see Mrs. Emerson in Brooklyn, — I am sure dear Mrs. Ingham will give me a letter to her; you shall go to Vermont, — is that the name? — and see Mr. Morton; we will both go to Chicago, — which, till I heard you speak, Mr. Ingham, I always called Chickago, — and Harry Wadsworth shall introduce us to America." And so it was ordered. They stayed with us a month longer. I will not tell how many trout they caught, for I should have every cockney scared from the Adirondacks down on No. 9 if I did. But at last the good-byes came, and they started on their way.

No! I shall not write the history of their travels. Little Mrs. Dalrymple may do that herself, and I wish she would. I have only to tell where they crossed Harry Wadsworth's track again.

Dalrymple chose to take boat, instead of rail, west from Buffalo. So they sailed one evening in the *Deerhound*, a famous boat of those days, and their first experience of the floating palace of the Western waters. Sunset, twilight, evening of that June day were as beautiful as hearts could wish, and again and again this young bride and bridegroom congratulated themselves that they had forsworn the train. When bedtime came, Horace led Mabel in from the guards, where they had been watching the moon; but before they went to their state-room, after midnight, they stopped to watch some euchre-players who were

sitting up late in the great saloon. As they sat there, the captain lounged in. They knew him by sight; he had done the honors at the tea-table. He came up to the table and said, "Gentlemen, I want you to come forward and see this schooner on our quarter." Mabel took her husband's arm to go with him; but the captain said, "No, madam, it is too damp for you; we will not keep your husband long," and with the other men walked away.

Horace stayed — how long — one minute or ten — Mabel does not know. But when he came back it was very quickly, and he said in a low tone to the three women who sat together around the deserted table, "The boat is on fire; dress the children, and wake the passengers as quietly as you can. Mabel, wait for me in the after part of the saloon below this. I will come to you there." And he was gone.

Mabel was probably never so completely her own mistress in her life. She saw that the saloon was as yet uninvaded. She called the sleepy chambermaids, and gave them their messages so calmly that they were not frightened. From state-room to state-room she passed along, and knocked up the sleepers, till her share was done, and well done. Then she went to their own state-room, took the travelling-sack in which Horace had his money and his letters, went downstairs to the after saloon, to wait there as she was bidden.

All this time it was amazing to her that there was so little noise. The engines were stopped. That she noticed. She heard the men at work forward, but forward was far, far away. If she listened, she did not know what were the noises she heard, — plashes; heavy blows as of cutting timber; plashes again, — an occasional sharp word which she did not understand, but around her the still monotone of the saloon, in which there were only herself and two little girls and their mother. And how long this lasted, Mabel did not know.

But at last the smoke came. Something — bulkhead or what — I do not know — something gave way forward, and the smoke came, driving, piling right in upon them, so that those hateful lamps which had been so still and clear and unconscious became, of a sudden, dim spots in fog. The children cried and coughed. Mabel and their mother held them to the open windows. But this could not last, — the smoke was dense and denser; the women dropped the children out on a pile of cordage that was coiled up in the narrow passage-way behind the cabin, then clambered out of the windows themselves, and in that narrow passage, cramped between the cabin wall and the after railing, stood alone with the little ones. Then, for the first time, she understood that some freak of the fire had cut her off from the main body of the passengers and from her husband. Or were they four together there the only persons living out of all? No! some-

body was alive forward, for although for a few minutes the air was almost clear, that lasted only for a few minutes. Clearly the fire was gaining forward, and of a sudden the engines began to move again. The other woman said to Mabel, "They are driving her ashore." Whatever was the reason, it seemed fatal to them. The stream of hot air and hot smoke now circled all round them, so that indeed they could scarcely breathe. Mabel looked on the rail, and so did the poor mother. They could see the projecting after timbers and the rudder-head passing through them, — they must do something, — and without a word Mabel climbed down, stayed herself firmly by one of the cross-chains which she found there connecting with the rudder, observed that neither chain nor rudder moved any longer, and then bade the other woman pass her one of the children, and come down herself with the youngest, which she did. How long that lasted Mabel did not know, — whether it was five miles or five minutes that they rushed over that foaming sea, with that hot air above them, with this slippery foothold below, and her arms growing so tired as she held child and chain. Not so long but she did hold on, however, till of a sudden a sharp explosion forward taught them both that a crisis had come. In a moment more the way of the boat was checked, and in two minutes Mabel saw that all was still, — but the fire. Still that did not drift fiercely back upon them now.

Nobody came near them. Probably nobody could come. But when that horrible weird motion over the foam stopped, Mabel was braver. As for the other woman, she never showed sign of terror from the beginning. Mabel now found she could lower herself enough to sit upon the top of the rudder, and stay herself by a chain above. She did not dare climb up upon the boat again; she then got her child in her arms, and moved out far enough to make room for the other woman. And there, with cinders and smoke flying over their heads, in water to their armpits, holding by rod and chain above them, each with a child embraced, — there those women sat, it must have been for hours. I remember Mabel told me she had to wet the rod above her with the water at last, when the fire from the wreck above heated the rod so that she could not hold it in her hand. She trained the child to splash water up to it so as to keep it cool.

Meanwhile all they could see was flame and smoke in volumes borne high in the air, but away from them by the gentle wind, as the fire slowly worked its way along to them. All they could hear was the roaring of the flames. But flames and smoke were borne away from them. The wreck was drifting and drifting nearer and nearer to the Ohio shore. And so in the gray morning the end came. It grounded. Mabel had seen the stars grow pale; it had seemed to her that "the dawning gray would never dapple

into day," but it was lighter, — light enough for her to see the shore, — and then one, two, three little boats pushing toward them. And then for the first time these women spoke louder than their breath, and the little children cried aloud again with them. The cry did little, I suppose, but a white handkerchief did more. Swift and straight a flat-boat dashed down to them, a boat-hook struck in the stern-timber above Mabel's head; two men in the bows clutched the two women; and some one cried, "Back her, back her," and they and the two children were safe.

They took them to the kindest, loveliest, poorest home in Ohio, which was just behind the beach. Tender hands undressed those women and children, chafed their swollen arms and hands, rubbed them warm and dry, dressed them in the best the cabin had, laid them on home-spun sheets, as clean as they were coarse. And all four slept, — as you never slept.

When Mabel awoke just before nightfall, and tried to make out where she was, wondering at the rough slabs, the only thing her eye lighted on, that she ever saw before, was the portrait of Henry Wadsworth. That was pinned upon the door.

CHAPTER IV

MABEL'S LANDING-PLACE

THIS, then, was what Mabel had taken the ring on her finger for; what she had left her father's house in Norfolk for; what she had started to see the world for! To find herself lying in these coarse, homespun sheets, on that queer, high, creaking bedstead; looking Harry Wadsworth's picture in the face; opening her fingers to see if she could open them, after all that clinging to the rod and chain; and trying, by such foolish things as that, to keep herself from asking where Horace was — if he were in this world or in another; where his body was — ah! how wretched! — and what she should do. To pretend to drive these questions out of her head, she opened and shut her hands, and wondered if the rust-stains would ever wash off, and looked at her wedding-ring, and remembered the parish church and that winter morning when Horace put it there. It was not in that way that she would forget asking where he was, or if he was in this world or another!

Mabel sat up in the bed. Everything seemed terribly still. She looked round the little room. There was not a shoe or stocking on the floor, nor any of her clothes on the one wooden chair.

"Alice!" cried Mabel at last. For "Alice" was the only name she knew of all the people who had surrounded her in these terrible hours. They had called the little girl "baby," though she was four or five years old. The children had called their mother "mother," and "Alice" was the only name that had been spoken.

So Mabel called "Alice," and waited; and she wondered where she was. She did not think she was in heaven. In heaven she would not have had a calico "comforter" over her stuffed with cotton, nor would pictures from "Frank Leslie" be pasted on the walls.

Alice did not come, but in her place a nice, motherly old lady came, who looked almost as different from anybody Mabel had ever seen before as if she had been one of Dutton's Kermadeck men. But there was the touch of nature there, and Mabel and she were kin.

"Dear child," said the old woman, "cannot you sleep any more? Do you feel at all rested?"

"Have they heard from my husband?" said Mabel; "have any more people been brought in? are there any —— bodies?"

"Bodies? Dear — no, no," said Mrs. Morrow; "do not be troubled about the others; there are plenty of people to take care of them, and they with their own boats too. Do not think about them, dear, and do not cry; let me bring you a cup of tea, and then you shall have your clothes and dress yourself. The men will be

back to supper, and we shall know all the news."

"But tell me," said Mabel, "tell me where I am, and where I can write to. What must I do? I never was alone before. I never had to do anything before — like — like this, you know."

"Like what, my dear lady? — like taking a cup of tea — or like dressing yourself?" And Mrs. Morrow would not stop for an answer. There was a good deal of dry common-sense in Mrs. Morrow, who, after sixty years of emigration, of a new home, of birth, life, and death, of joy and of sorrow, was no longer a fool. She was, therefore, without knowing it, a philosopher. "Come, Amandy-Ann," she cried, bustling back into the kitchen sitting-room, "Come, Amandy-Ann, where are you? Here 's the English lady awake again, and nigh faint for her tea."

"How did she know that I was an Englishwoman?" said Mabel to herself. She forgot that if Mrs. Morrow had turned up at the Swaffham station in Norfolk near her father's house, and had asked her, Mabel, the way to Cockley, she would have known that Mrs. Morrow was an American, though she only spoke ten words. "I must get up and do something," said Mabel to herself again; "but how can I get up till they bring me my clothes?"

So they succeeded in keeping her prisoner for a long hour, while she "worried down" the tea, and ate a slice of toast, and tried to eat a slice of

corn-bread, which was new to her, and broke an egg, as Mrs. Morrow had never seen an egg broken before. When she had pretended to eat a part of the egg, Mrs. Morrow relented so far as to let Amanda Ann bring in some dry clothing, and so to emancipate Mabel from her prison.

The men came home. An early tea was served, — a meal such as Mabel never saw before. The men were cheery, though with no grounds intelligible for cheeriness. But they explained that there were schooners which had run by Huron, and a certain brig which was known to be beating up to St. Clair, and two freight boats and a flat which were bound down the lake, and much more than poor Mabel could understand, any of which alone could have rescued all the *Deerhound's* people, if, as no man permitted himself to doubt, they were all in their quarter boats. Indeed, they could rescue themselves. How many hundreds of thousands this cheerful fleet might rescue if it were combined in one, Mabel was too downcast to inquire.

Poor girl! she put this and that together so far as to make out that we, far away in No. 9, in Maine, were the only people in America near enough to her for her to confer with, and she asked Elnathan Morrow eagerly if he could not send a telegram to us from her. Of course he could. He would "hitch up" at once and drive over to Elyria and leave the despatch so it should go the first thing in the morning. So Mabel wrote: —

"I am safe. But I do not know if Horace is. We were in the *Deerhound*. MABEL DALRYMPLE.

"To Rev. Frederic Ingham,
"No. 9, in the Third Range, Maine.
"By Skowhegan."

Mabel knew enough to know that a telegram must be short. But she was not much used to money yet, poor girl, and she did not know that as the Western Union Telegraph Co. coins it, that despatch cost Elnathan every cent of ready money he had laid up to pay his taxes with the next week. But if he had not had the money, Mrs. Morrow would have sent her three teaspoons to the watch-maker at Elyria rather than have that message delayed. Elnathan rose from the table before the rest of them, harnessed up, drove to Elyria, and the next morning the Elyria "Democrat" announced that it stopped the press to say that four more persons had been rescued from the conflagration, — a young English lady, and her companion, the mother of two children, who were with her; and that "all these persons were now resting at the mansion-house of our estimable fellow-citizen, Elnathan Morrow, Esq., who has favored us with this information."

After Elnathan had left, poor Mabel did her very best not to be unsociable. Her companion on the wreck was still sleeping off the strain, in the same bed with her two children.

"Do you know," said Mabel, "that the first

thing I saw when I opened my eyes was the face of a friend? At least I call him a friend."

"Friend?" said Mrs. Morrow, troubled for a moment with the fear that the pretty English girl was wandering. "Who did you see?"

"Oh!" said Mabel, "I only meant I saw his picture — Mr. Wadsworth's picture."

"Did you know Harry Wadsworth?" cried the old lady, and every one else at the table said in the same instant substantially the same thing.

Mabel explained that she had never seen him herself, and at once an air of disappointment showed that no one else at the table had ever seen him. But Mabel said to the youngest girl that if she would bring the little travelling bag which had hung at her side all through the night, she would show her something. So the bag was brought from behind the stove, and Mabel found that the key still turned in the rusted lock. She pulled out a wet handkerchief, rusty scissors, the sloppy stained bit of canvas work that she had been stitching on the afternoon before — was it yesterday afternoon or was it not some time in the last century? — and down at the bottom she came to a mother-of-pearl cardcase, which had stood the whole, undiluted. Mabel wiped it dry, opened it, looked a moment at another picture which was not stained nor even wet, and from behind that picture pulled out her picture of Harry Wadsworth. It was the last thing that I

gave her, except my blessing, when she left us at No. 9.

And then she explained, and they explained. None of them had ever seen Harry in the flesh. But here was Mabel who had seen me, who had seen him, and she had seen letters that he wrote; and if her trunk were ever found, in her portfolio she had a note of his that I had given her. And they — they knew about him. Mrs. Elnathan Morrow — the pale, thin, pretty young woman, the mother of the baby, the one that had said so little, but had been frying the cakes all supper-time, — she came from Ethan, in Vermont. Her brother Samuel was one of the Will Morton Base Ball Club; and she had first met Elnathan, if she would have told the truth, at a reading club at Ethan, where Will Morton read "Monte Cristo" and "Lady Geraldine" to them. And her pale face flushed at last, and her silence thawed, and she did leave the griddle at last and came and sat at the corner of the table, as she warmed up to tell how Will Morton laid down the book one night and talked to them all about Harry. And of course she told many stories of him, which I cannot repeat here; and then Mabel got to telling some stories that I had told her. And Celia felt as if Mabel and she were old friends, and told her more about Will Morton, and about their life in Ethan, and about the base ball club, and about her brother Sam, who had gone to Minnesota. She told about her own

marriage, and how strange it seemed to her to come out here; and Mabel learned that between Ethan in Vermont and the Southern shore of Lake Erie, there was as much difference as between Cockley in Norfolk and Ethan in Vermont, and she learned that she was not the only girl that had left her father's house to find a strange, very strange home. If Harry Wadsworth had never done anything else, he had made sisters of those two women. So they all talked and talked. Just after the June sunset the youngest children slipped in with two great bowls of beautiful strawberries, and Mabel ate from these as she talked, almost unconsciously. The fire in the stove went down, the griddle-cakes grew cold, and it was dark, when their long croon was interrupted, as Mrs. Palmer, Mary's companion in misfortune, opened the kitchen door and came in.

CHAPTER V

OF HORACE

HORACE? he had been knocked on the head as he was at work on the forward deck, very early in the business. Some one in the pilot's box hove an axe forward to the mate, who had called for it. Horace was stepping across hastily, the axe struck him in the forehead, knocked him down, and he lay there senseless. The water leaking

from the hose that they were working with dribbled down on his face sometimes, but nobody could stop to nurse him.

But when the game was played through, when the last quarter boat hauled up under the bow of the *Deerhound*, and the mate for the last time came on board and said to the captain, "You must come now, sir, there is not a living cat on the vessel," the captain pointed to Horace as he lay there, and said, "Silas, we will heave him down, too. Perhaps there's life in him. Whether there is or not, it sha'n't be said that the only two English people in the boat went to the bottom. Handsome fellow he is," — and the captain took Horace by the shoulders, and Silas took him under his hips and carried the senseless body to the opening in the rail; they called two firemen who stood on the thwarts and handed it down, and laid it along as best they could on the after thwart and in the hollow behind it. Then the boat-hooks shoved her off, and the boat followed the others.

"Those women," said Silas, meditatively, "must have stifled in ten minutes after he sent them there. What on airth made him tell them to go into the ladies' saloon?"

Horace was not killed, else these pages were not here. The captain never believed he was killed. As soon as the men gave way at the oars, and the boat was well off the wreck, the captain cut off the waist buttons of Horace's clothes, laid

bare his breast, untied his neck-cloth, and again and again flung water in his face, as he lay in the arms of that good-natured German, who was wondering, perhaps, if this were the usual mode of travel in America. In fifteen minutes the muscular, full-blooded young Englishman opened his eyes; in three more he was wondering; then he shook himself free, sat up, put his hand to his head, looked round, and began to ask questions.

The burning *Deerhound* could still be seen, and in reply, the captain pointed her out to him far astern. Then how boldly the captain lied, as the poor wretch asked after Mabel. You would have thought Mabel was in a Lord Mayor's barge, lying upon cushions, fanned by Cupids and rowed by Naiads, so emphatic were the Captain's assurances of her comfort and safety — assurances which Horace was just stupid enough, with the blow, to believe. He grew faint again with his effort, needed a little of the Bourbon the captain gave him, and sank back, with his eyes blurred and his head spinning, on the German's shoulder.

Then it was that the second botch was made in the proceedings of that night. The boats were all pulling for Huron against a heavy western breeze which was freshening into a gale. The captain's boat was the last of the little squadron, which was pulling in order — it must be near twenty miles — that they might not risk the beaching business with that heavy sea on. By daybreak the others were all safe, and were tele-

graphed as safe all over the country, while the same telegram reported that the Captain's boat was not heard from, and that two women and two children, and an Englishman, name not known, had gone down in the *Deerhound.*

This botch all resulted because, as the captain's boat slowly followed the others, they crossed the line of the little Canadian brig which was beating across the lake back and forth, working her way home from Buffalo to Amherstburg. It was a natural thing, of course, to answer her friendly hail, a very natural thing to run alongside, a natural thing to take the line her skipper threw, a natural thing to go on board, all of them, and to take the boat in tow. Then, as towards morning the gale did freshen, and they had to stay on board, it was natural to stay. But because of all this, so natural at every step, when in the fog of the next day she went ashore and bilged on Pelee Island, and they all crawled to land in wet jackets, that was a pity. That was the reason that for four days Horace thought his wife was in heaven; and that for three of those same four days she was more and more sure he was there.

But Horace also fitted off his telegram to No. 9, in the third range. And his telegram worked through rather faster than hers, though it started later. The two arrived at Skowhegan the same night. And one express messenger was started for No. 9 in the morning with the two. The

weak-minded brother neglected to bring any newspaper with him, so that all that Polly and I knew was in these words: —

"We were in the *Deerhound*. Mabel is lost. Address Detroit.

"HORACE DALRYMPLE."

and in these, as above, —

"I am safe. But I do not know if Horace is. We were in the *Deerhound*. MABEL DALRYMPLE."

What the *Deerhound* was or where they were, we did not know. But Mabel's despatch was dated Elyria and Horace's was dated London, C. W., and we knew that C. W. did not mean West Centre of the real London, but Canada West of the — new one.

Poor souls! Lake Erie was between them, — and neither knew if the other were alive.

We gave the boy his supper, fed his horse well, admonished him to bring a newspaper another time, and started him back with the return despatches: —

"Your husband is well. Address him at Detroit.

"F. INGHAM."

"Your wife is well. Find her at Elyria. F. INGHAM."

And with hopes that they would not go Evangelining and Gabrieling it all over the Western country till they died, we went to bed, still wishing the boy had brought a newspaper, and wondering what had happened to the *Deerhound*.

Mabel got that despatch the third night, so she slept comfortably and happy. Two days still it was before she had anything but the telegram to live upon; but the telegram was enough, and good Mrs. Morrow's chicken fixings and strawberries and "young Hyson" all helped a little. And they fitted off poor Mrs. Palmer and little Alice and "baby" for Philadelphia. She thought she might as well go to Philadelphia as anywhere. And at last, five days, I believe, after the night of horrors, Horace came up behind Mabel, as she sat in the piazza with Celia's baby in her arms, put his brown hands on her two cool cheeks, bent over and kissed her, upside down! And Mabel did not faint away!

The next morning Dalrymple wrote to me at considerable length, giving some hint of the story I have been telling, and of his plans for refitting himself and his wife. Here is the end of the letter: —

"While all this goes forward we shall stay here, knowing where we are well off. Poor Mabel really is at home here with these nice people, who are just what you would call clever — as kind as they can be. Do you know, as soon as she opened her eyes she saw Wadsworth's picture, and it proved that the waves had flung her upon one more of what she calls the Harry Wadsworth homes. And I, — before this poor skipper I tell you of and I had talked five minutes on the logs there on Pelee Island, watching his little vessel as she ground to pieces, I found he was one of Wadsworth's

men! What do you think of that? He was a rough customer, but when I said something sympathetic about the loss of the vessel, he answered as cheerfully as a bird, evidently knowing that it was all right. I told him he was a philosopher. 'No,' he said, very simply, handing me back my pipe from which he was lighting his, 'it is not my philosophy, it is my religion. But I don't like to call it so. Our notion is that a man had better not talk much about his religion, certainly had better not think at all about saving his soul. We think he 'd better do what he can to save other people's souls, or if he is n't strong that way, save their bodies, or keep them from the devil, some way: and forget he has any soul himself, if he can't do better.'

"Only think, Ingham, of my hearing such words of wisdom out on a freshwater beach, that did not know enough to have the tide rise. 'Who do you mean by we?' I said. 'Oh,' said he, a little nervously this time, 'a little set of us who don't care to make any noise about our Club; we call ourselves Harry Wadsworth's men.'

"Ingham, I started as if I had been shot. Then I was afraid for a minute I was not right in my head, after this dig the axe had given me. But it was quite clear that the man, and the lake, and the logs were there, and I questioned him further. He made no secret of it; there were thirty or forty of them who had arranged to get together sometimes, in Detroit, to help each other as well as they could, in their charities, which he represented as mere nothings, but which I found afterwards were what the world's people would make quite a fuss about, mostly among emigrants and sailors. This man,

Woodberry, said, as simply as he said everything else, that it was the only way he had ever experienced religion; that his father and mother were religious people, and he had a brother who was a Baptist minister; but that he did not make much of their notions or their way, but that these Wadsworth people pulled him through a hard turn once when they found him sick in a sailor boarding-house, and he had found since that their religion proved a very good religion for him.

"When we passed through Detroit, he took me round to one of their meetings. It had some of the fuss and form that you and I have seen at lodge, and division, and communication meetings all the world over, but it had a perfectly healthy tone, was true as truth, and tremendously energetic. There was no vow of secrecy, but great unwillingness to get into the newspaper. When I showed my picture of Wadsworth, I became quite a hero. They were glad to hear of the founder of their Club from one side more. Remember that, till that moment, I was in the clothes I swam ashore in. What should you say if I told you that it was the President of the Harry Wadsworth Club who introduced me to the Detroit banker who honored the draft on New York, in which I am at this moment dressed, and with which I am shod and hatted. So much for the photograph.

"They have told me of three or four other clubs somewhat like their own. But I do not think there is any effort made to form clubs. It is rather an accident as people drift together. I found they knew all your story of the meeting at the funeral, what you call 'Ten times one is ten.' Some of them were friends of Merton's,

some of them had known Professor Widdifield's scholars. They had a printed list of the 'original ten,' as they called them. I showed them Mrs. Ingham's calendar of the one hundred and three people who had had their lives lifted up, and made less selfish in their different ways, as that man's central influence extended. That pleased them; they had not, for instance, known anything about the Kermadeck Islands, nor what had become of you or Mrs. Emerson. I showed them Mrs. Emerson's letter to me, and told them about my visit to Mrs. Merriam. And then one of these statistical brethren proposed a count, whereat a more godly brother quoted Scripture and explained about David's census. None the less did they count up the people they knew and I knew who this day count Harry Wadsworth as personal friend, personal comforter, adviser, and help to them. Ingham, there were one thousand and twenty-three!

"I will write you again before we leave here. The house has but three rooms, but they make us very comfortable. Mabel needs rest, and has to get clothed again. Truly yours, H. D."

I read that letter to Polly, and she said, "Ten times a hundred is a thousand. It was only six years ago."

CHAPTER VI

EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AND AMERICA

ALL through this six years it is quite certain that nobody had ever gone back to the idea of a club,

which, as I have said, was stated for the first time in the station-house at Colchester. Bridget Corcoran founded it, if anybody founded it; but probably not even Widdifield thought for these six years that the club existed, seeing he had failed in that experiment of a "mutual expression of principles." It had not occurred to Widdifield then that if these principles did not show themselves in act and fact, there was little good in "expressing" them in words; and, on the other hand, that if they did show themselves in act and fact, there was less good in expressing them in words. But he learned this afterwards, as most of us did.

No; it was the set of accidents, if you choose to call them so, by which Dalrymple, having been personally introduced to the "Original Ten," had become acquainted with their Hundred friends, and the Thousand who had known the hundreds. It was this set of accidents, or providences, as you choose to call them, that led us all a little further, not into any organization, — there is no organization now, — but into an enumeration of the results of the influence of one pure-minded man, who lived in both worlds at one moment.

The Harry Wadsworth Club, as we call it now, for convenience, which first met in the North Colchester station, had enlarged itself in six years, without knowing it, and without trying to enlarge, to a thousand members. They did not

know each other's names; and there were not many of them who cared to. They had a great many different constitutions. Some were clubs for singing, some were sewing-schools, some were base-ball clubs; and this rather formal one at Detroit, upon which, by good luck, Horace Dalrymple had stumbled, had officers, — a president, secretary and records, and all that. All you could say of these thousand people was that in six years the life of that young railroad freight-agent had quickened their lives, had made them less selfish and less worldly. They lived more for each other and for God, because he had lived, and they knew that he had rendered them this service. They showed their knowledge of it in different ways, or some of them perhaps did not speak of it at all. Some of the younger and more demonstrative ones had secret breastpins with H. W. in a cypher on them. Some of the others, like the Morrows, had Harry's picture framed and hanging on the wall. Some of them, like me, carried it in their hearts, and needed no bit of paper.

But as I say, in six years the ten had multiplied to a thousand by as simple a process as this, —

$10 \times 10 = 100$. $100 \times 10 = 1000$.

And at this fascinating point, alas, I must leave the detail of the story. Indeed, as you see, I have had to leave it already. Of these thousand lives, I have told the story of only four or

five, and only a very little part of that. If anybody should tell the story it would be Horace Dalrymple, who with his pretty Mabel travelled up and down America, backwards and forwards, as the Harry Wadsworth people advised him, sent him, or invited him, for three years and more, after that horrible night on the *Deerhound*. They saw a great deal of beautiful scenery, and I dare say they "were shown" — as the penny-a-liners love to say — a great many "institutions." They came out in the South Park in the Rocky Mountains; and they went to the Middle Park and to the North Park. I do not know where they did not go. But they did not travel to see "institutions." They did not, in the first instance, go to hunt, or to fish, or to make sketches. They went where one of Harry Wadsworth's men sent them to another. They went from prince to peasant, — you would say, — only there is never a peasant nor a prince west of the Atlantic nor east of the Pacific. They went from cabin to palace, and from palace to cabin. So they saw what so few travellers see, — the home life of the people here.

These persons they visited did not sit in groups, with their best clothes on, talking about Harry Wadsworth. Not they! A great many of them did not speak his name in a year, maybe did not think of him for a month. "It was not that," said pretty Mabel to me, when she was fresh from this Sindbad life, — "the freemasonry of it was

that you found everywhere a cheerful outlook, a perfect determination to relieve suffering, and a certainty that it could be relieved, — a sort of sweetness of disposition, which comes, I think, from the habit of looking across the line, as if death were little or nothing, and with that, perhaps, a disposition to be social, to meet people more than half way."

Thus spoke the little Englishwoman; and I, in my analytical way, used to the inevitable three heads of the sermon, said to myself, — "Humph, that is Mabel's translation of faith, hope, and love."

Horace and Mabel, after their three years' journey, had found us living in South Boston. We were sitting after dinner one day on the woodshed behind the house, which served us as a piazza, when Horace laid down his pipe and asked me if I remembered explaining to him the way in which people dispersed over the United States, — so that the census shows that each State is made up from the children of all. I had forgotten it, but he recalled it to me.

"That was what first set me on this journey," said he, "which has carried us so far. Now the queer thing about it is that it is no special law of your country, this dispersion and radiation; it is a law of all modern civilization."

"Of course it is," said I.

"Of course it is," said he. "Here is this Connecticut pinmaker." And he took out from his pocket-book a bit of green paper, evidently

torn from a paper of pins, on which the man said that he was "Pinmaker for the people of the United States, and for exportation to all parts of the world." "Now that," said Horace, "is what you call a piece of buncombe; but, for all that, it is true. The old statement is true, that if you import into Russia a bottle of champagne or a piece of broadcloth, you import liberal ideas there as truly as if you imported Tom Paine. Commerce is no missionary, to carry more or better than you have at home. But what you have at home, be it gospel or be it drunkenness, commerce carries the world over. As What's-his-name said, the walking-beam of Livingstone's steam-launch preached as well as Livingstone, and a good many more people heard it."

"It would not have said much if Livingstone had not been there," said I, a little crustily.

"Don't be sore, padre," said Horace. "Nobody said it would. But you see Livingstone was there. That is just what I am saying. And there are Livingstones all over this world, who are not acquainted with the Royal Geographical Society. As we came on from New York last night, after Mabel turned in, I got out this note-book, and I added up the number of men and women who belong to these different Wadsworth clubs, who have travelled or settled in different parts of this world. Just look at them."

Sure enough, I found Horace, — who was always a better acting adjutant than he was any-

thing else, — true to his nature, had entered in close columns, forty lines to a page, the people, that any of the Harry Wadsworth people regarded as being really in earnest in relieving the suffering of the world, and getting the world out of the mud. "There 's a sort of law of average about it," said Harry. "Every now and then a member dies. Then I make a red star, — so, against him. But on the average, you find that every working man, or especially every working woman in one of these lodges, or clubs, or singing-schools, is represented at the end of three years' time by ten persons whom he has started on a better kind of life than he was leading before. When I was with these people at Detroit, after I got my head knocked open, we counted up a little more than a thousand of what they called, in their stately way, 'affiliated members.' Your wife, here, was one of their 'affiliated members.' But I have got here, now, — in three years' more time, — see here," — and he turned over page after page of his crowded note-book. At the end was a rough count — 10,140. "That is what three years have made of their one thousand and twenty-three, so far as we know. Of course, a great many of them are wholly out of our sight."

Little Pauline, who is an enthusiast about Harry Wadsworth, though she never saw him, clapped her hands with delight as Horace said this, and cried out, "TEN TIMES ONE THOUSAND IS TEN THOUSAND."

"Do you learn that at the Lincoln School?" said Horace, with approval. "I shall have to put you on my register, I believe. But what I was saying, Ingham, is this: Here are underlined with blue all the seafaring men in this list. See how many. With red are all the Englishmen, Scotchmen, Germans, and the rest, whose homes are likely to be in any part of Europe, — see here, and here. With green are marked the Asiatics: people at Calcutta, — there 's a man at Singapore, — all these, Japanese men. And these, underscored with black — there are fifty-one even of them — are in Africa; you would say it was impossible. But what with Algiers, Alexandria, Zanzibar, the Cape, and a good many men and women who went to Liberia, Harry Wadsworth and his loving life are represented, so far as that, in Africa."

Then Horace went on to say that for himself his travelling was over. The people at home were wild to see Mabel and her baby. The child himself was weaned, and he should finally "settle down" with the two. "I can do as much at home in renewing this world and bringing in the kingdom," said he, "as if the Arapahoes were scalping me. And I foresee that my mission ground is Norfolk, which I did not suspect when you and I were in Calabria. What I have to say now is this, that in Norfolk I shall constitute myself the assistant adjutant, for that quarter of the world, of these Wadsworth people. I mean to keep up

the list of these whom I have marked with red. If I write one letter every morning and one every evening to them, and four every Sunday, I can write in three years twenty-five hundred letters to one part of Europe and to another. I mean to find out, before three years are over, what the radiating influence of one Christian life is in a quarter of the world which the man never saw who lived that life."

We were talking this over, when we met the others at tea. Mabel was full of it. She really knew the Coffins who had gone to Sweden and the Wentworths who were at Dresden, and I know not how many more she meant to write letters to and get information. Mary Throop was taking tea with us. One of the real steady-going people she, capable of immense enthusiasm, all the more because she never shows any, — no, though you put her on the rack and pull her tendons asunder, — the approved way of awaking enthusiasm. She looked over Dalrymple's book with approbation, nodded silently once and again, understood it all the better because no one explained it to her, smiled her approval as she gave it back, and said, "I am going to get a book; I am going to take Asia."

"Will you?" cried Horace, exultant. "I had not supposed anybody else would care anything about doing it. But if you only will! You see, my dear Miss Mary, it is not the glorifying of this young man; that is the last thing anybody

wants to do. It is that any life as noble as his and as pure as his never dies, and that his power to lift up the world is always going on!"

Yes; Mary Throop saw that too. She had not enlisted herself for any work of mutual admiration. She wanted to register the real diffusive power of right, and truth, and love, and life. She would do her share.

Horace thought a moment and said, "If you really will take Asia, I know who will take Africa. Mabel, do you not remember that great black man on the railroad from Memphis? Here is his name, Fergus Jamiesson. He will take Africa. He had been up the Niger. He had a passion for statistics. And I have his card somewhere. We can have the whole world. For there is nothing the Detroit men will like better than to keep up America. I will write to-night to Taylor and to Wagner. They have the statistical passion there."

"For my part," said Polly, "I detest writing letters to people I never saw. I believe you men like it, because you did it in the army, — and you thought King Bomba was beaten when you had emptied a pigeon-hole by putting all the papers into big envelopes, and writing on the outside 'Respectfully referred to Major Pendennis.'"

"For my part," continued she, "I had rather the children should spend their money on a grab-bag at a fair than bring me home a parcel of letters from the fair post-office, that were written

at a venture, from somebody to nobody, to be posted nowhere, because they were good for nothing."

Mabel laughed and said, "Amen, amen. But you see, dear Polly," said she, "or you shall see, that these letters of ours are written by somebody of flesh and blood to somebody of blood and flesh, with something in them, and going — to Sweden — mine are."

"Humph," said Polly, incredulously, "they will take the express train back to Weeden station when they get there." But Mabel only laughed the louder, said she should write her first letter then and there; that Mary Throop should write hers, and that Horace should write his.

"And Polly," said I, "shall pay the postage out of her rag-money."

So the three first letters in this gigantic correspondence were written that night in our sitting-room in D Street. They were read, criticised, postscripts added, and then forwarded, and so the second half of the formation of the club began.

CHAPTER VII

THESE FOUR AND THE ISLES OF THE OCEAN

YES, it is true that the next three years of this history become a little less determinate. There

is less of that "realism," as the critics call it, — which the critics so much dislike, because it makes you sure that what you read is true, instead of being bookish, and in general improbable or unreal, as the critics think all truly good writing should be. You see it was on the 24th of March, 1870, that Dalrymple and his pretty wife left our house to take the *City of Brussels* for Queenstown and Liverpool, — and from that day to this day I have never seen their faces more. Also Mary Throop has never been in D Street again. As for Fergus Jamiesson, I never saw him, far less the Detroit corresponding secretaries. What I am now to tell, therefore, of the three years between 1870 and 1873, I am to compile from statistics, files of letters, and the law of general averages, and it will have much more the vague air of ordinary history, therefore, than the truth truly told ever does, — from which, as you know, ordinary history is indefinitely removed.

Sparing you the detail, then, in which prophecy and history fail alike, here is the sum of the story. Of the TEN THOUSAND, Dalrymple had the names of I know not how many hundreds of men and women, who from this cosmopolitan country of ours had carried Harry Wadsworth's name, or his picture, or his printed letters, to one or another part of Europe, or, if not these, had carried the spirit of his life there. They had what the Detroit men called the four corner-stones, — and in Detroit had painted on four slabs

in their lodge-house: "They did not care for themselves," "they never looked backward," "they always lent a hand," and "they were not afraid to die." Yes, and they knew, but for Harry Wadsworth, they would have thought more of themselves, would have been brooding and regretting, — would have been slower to help, — and would have clung tighter to life. With these eight hundred, more or less, men and women, Horace and Mabel began their correspondence: three letters a day, counting hers, and five or six every Sunday. Well for them that postage was coming lower, — but they sold their foreign stamps for the benefit of the cause. That was an economy Mrs. Haliburton taught them.

Well! a great many letters never were answered, perhaps a third part. But on the other hand, it proved at once that there were in Europe already many more of the apostles, as Dalrymple began to call them, than he and Mabel had any idea of. They had to open new books, with much wider margins, and much more space between the lines. Iron-men had not been ironing in Sweden without carrying there the old Cronstadt lore; railroad men did not go to Russia without carrying there the North-Colchester traditions; young artists did not paint in Rome without talking to their model boys, brigands or beggars, as it might happen, in the spirit with which Harry talked to Will Corcoran and the Tidd boys. Nay, Horace even went down into

Calabria and established an order there among people as black as the most veritable carbonari, and he was fond of saying that he found there some Italians who remembered the padre Colonel Ingham, and who had not forgotten what I had told them, in my wretched way, of Harry.

I think Mabel was most touched when, as they were coming home through Thuringia, and had stopped on her account for a day or two at the smallest and least pretentious inn that ever escaped from being put into Murray, the tidy girl who fried the trout, made the bread, smoothed the pillows, brushed away the flies, and in the evening played on the guitar, — proved to speak English, and proved to have learned it at Manitowoc, in Wisconsin. Mabel was so far Westernized by this time that she clave to the German girl as to a sister, — more, I am afraid, for the flesh is weak, than if the girl had been a bar-maid in Norwich or in Aylsham, rather nearer Mabel's home than Manitowoc was. Be this as it may, they sisterized at once. Mabel talked Wisconsin to her, and she talked of the Lakes to Mabel, — broken English and broken German got cemented together; and before they were done, the Fräulein had produced a Harry-Wadsworth breastpin! They had had a little church there in Wisconsin, back twenty miles from the lake, where one of Widdifield's men was the minister! And this girl also had learned "to look forward and not backward, to look up and not down, to look out

and not in," and to "lend a hand." And when she came back to Thuringia, in the little guest-house there, she had organized a chorus of peasant-girls, who met her once a week, and read their Bibles together, and sung together, and knitted together, and four times a year gave away the stockings they knit to the old women in the charcoal huts, — the witches of seven generations ago, — and they did this in memory of Harry! So far that little candle threw its beams! They showed her the copy of "Frank Leslie," which had the picture of the dedication of the Wadsworth Library Hall in Pioneer, Missouri.

But I said I would not run into detail. Nor will I even cumber the page by the nicely ruled table Dalrymple made up for me three years after he left us. I had enough rather copy scraps from Mabel's crossed letters. She wrote freely to us, and did not count those letters among the official ones. But I will not do that. Nor will I ask you to follow Mary Throop through the mazes of her Asiatic correspondence. Queer stamps she got, with her Singapore mails and her Assam distribution offices, — and Galle and Shanghae and Petropaulowsky, and End-of-the-earth in general. Nor will I offend the proprieties by copying the very indifferent spelling of Fergus Jamiesson, writing from Monrovia, nor explain the great difficulties of his inland correspondence. Far less will I try to condense within these waning pages the full and triumphant statistics compiled

by the recording and corresponding secretaries, and the staffs of assistant correspondents and assistant recorders of the Detroit central "Office of Registration." Do not we all remember George Canning's word? "I can prove anything by statistics, — except the truth." So we will let the statistics go, accepting only the results.

For, about the time I got Dalrymple's elaborate letter of his three years' observation in Europe, Jamiesson's from Monrovia came. Before long there appeared an immense printed document from Detroit, and then we wrote to Mary for her Asiatic statistics. Queer enough, the old law held! In three years everybody who cared for this dissemination by personal love and personal work, of the spirit of an unselfish life, had found some nine, ten, or eleven people like himself. The average ran at ten, as it had done. And when Pauline, who was now a big child, added up all the columns, they came out, under this eternal law, *107,413*. "TEN TIMES TEN THOUSAND IS A HUNDRED THOUSAND!" That was the one remark which Pauline volunteered on the occasion.

And so my story is well-nigh done. Not because there is no more to tell, but because there is so much to tell. Anybody can count the seed-leaves on an elm-tree the year it starts, but Dr. Gray and Mr. Pierce are the only people I ever heard of who counted the leaves on the Washing-

ton Elm; and the man to whom they told the sum forgot whether there were a million or ten millon, because neither the word million nor the words ten million gave him much idea or meaning. I could tell you how Harry Wadsworth made the first ten what they were, but I could only hint of the way the first ten helped the first hundred. I could only pick out one story of the work of the first hundred, and of the first thousand I know I have told you nothing. But nothing dies which deserves to live. Fifteen years after he was dead, we loved him all the same; and every true word he spoke went over the world with all the same power, though it did happen to be spoken in the language of the Ngambe's by a chief of the Barotse to a woman of Sesheke. Wildfire does not stop of itself; and when a hundred thousand blades of grass are really on fire, it does not stop easily. So the next three years from this count of Paulina's proved.

Dalrymple had also had to appoint secretaries for France, Southern Italy, Northern Italy, and the rest. His polyglot was not very good, and he said different nations had different ways. So it was in Jamiesson's continent also, Kilimane and Sesheke, Ossuan and Jinga, there were many languages, many methods, little writing, and no mails. But love worked wonders easily in that African blood, and Jamiesson had most extraordinary stories from traders, and camel-drivers, and boatmen, and ivory carriers, and I know not

whom. In Asia they got things going with their own Asiatic fervor, and they went forward with a rush when they were started. All religions have begun there, and our co-operation in true life, which was no new religion, but only a little additional vigor with a little more simplicity in the old, was at home on the old soil. And here in America I need not tell how many forms of organization and of refusal to organize, how many statements, platforms, movements, combinations, head centres, middle centres, and centre centres would develop in three years.

What pleased me in it all was this, — that nobody, so far as I could find out, got swept away with the folly of counting noses. Nobody seemed to think he was subduing the world, — because he was in a correspondence bureau and kept count of those who subdued. I do not believe anybody gave more time to the correspondence than Horace did, — a letter before breakfast, and another as he went to bed, — perhaps half an hour a day. On the other hand, I am perfectly sure that Horace was ten times a man, because he was thus thrown into outside relations. What does the third "plank" say, but "Look out rather than in." It was near the end of this three years that they made an attack on us, Horace and Mabel, and insisted that our four oldest girls should make them a visit. We said it was nonsense, — but the girls did not think so, — and after many obstacles set up by me, Horace and Mabel and

the four girls conquered; and, trampling over my body, Alice, Bertha, Clara, and Pauline, all sailed for England, went to Norfolk, and made a most lovely summer visit there. Horace took them up into Scotland, and they tried salmon-fishing then, — all of them, Mabel and all, went to the Lakes together, and they slopped with their water-colors there; but the very best of all was at home. That was so homelike, so English, and so lovely. I think Mabel's father, in his heart of hearts, thought that these four girls were the most extraordinary things which Horace had ever sent home from his wanderings, that no stuffed kangaroo, or no living emu of his boyhood equalled these four adventurous living specimens. But none the less did he come over daily to the house to see what could be done that day for their amusement. And Horace's own father, as the girls by one accord declared, was "just lovely." Of which visit, let them write the history, — in this place only this is to be noted: that excepting when Pauline went bodily into Horace's den and compelled him to show her Wadsworth's letters, they hardly saw or heard anything of the secretary's duties as secretary. What they did see was the eager, cheerful life of a conscientious gentleman in the midst of a large tenantry. They saw farms in perfect order; they saw laborers with the lines of promotion open; they went into schools of cheerful, bright, intelligent children, well taught and thriving; they

saw all the time that Horace was lifting where he stood; and that by Swaffham in Norfolk, he was driving out the King Bombas of that region quite as effectually as he drove out another King Bomba from Calabria. His vocation was that of an English land-proprietor, compelling deserts to blossom and bear fruit; his avocation was so near to it that it was hard to discriminate. It was the making the men who worked on his estates to be more manly, and the lifting up their children's lives; yes, and without their knowing it also, the farmers who only paid him rent, and the laborers whom they hired, and their children also were lifted up in the general renovation. These were the vocation and the avocation. For a little "Third," as he called it, — a pastime of his dressing room, — he kept up the correspondence with such Englishmen as believed in the four cardinal points and were trying to make other people live by them.

Norfolk, Norfolk, Norfolk, — always Norfolk, with its dear English names, Swaffham and Cockley and Aylsham, and I know not where not, — are the burden of the girls' tales of this celebrated English visit. But the end of it is the part which specially belongs in this history of mine, namely, the expedition they all made to Wiesbaden. A queer place, you would have said, for Horace and Mabel actually to start for, having no other object than to entertain four country cousins, — that is, my four girls. But

you say this because you do not know that the Prime Minister, and indeed half the government, and the Crown Prince himself, were at this time all enthusiasts for "the four cardinal points" named above, and had, long before, painted these statements of them in letters of gold on the four sides of the Kursaal, where you, Mr. Chips, remember losing five hundred rouleaux the night before you left Wiesbaden. "Sursum corda," "vorwärts nicht ruckwärts," "αὐτοὺς οὐ σαυτόν," and "lend a hand." This was the way they rendered the four legends, which Detroit had been satisfied to print in our vernacular. I need not say that the whole gambling business was at an end; but though they were virtuous, there were cakes still, and what took the place of ale. The government — younger men than you and I remember in Baden — were all of them enthusiasts, and all of them æsthetic. They declared that they would show that Wiesbaden without high play could be made more attractive than Wiesbaden with it; and they gave the four "cardinal points" for the secrets of the attraction, and certainly they succeeded. The drama of Weimar was never better than theirs; the outdoor life of Wiesbaden itself, in its tawdry days, was never as luxurious as this was now; the fine art of Munich was more grandiose, but not half so lovely as this; and, what with pretty girls, enthusiastic artists, an opera beyond reproach, the perfection of comedy, the most agreeable

men in Europe and the most attractive women, — the people who came there managed to live without *rouge et noir*, — at least my girls did.

But they did not go there for mere agreeable living. It was, as we know, rather more than eighteen years since that meeting of ten of us in the North Colchester station-house. It was three years since, as I told you, Pauline added up her "hundred thousand" of the multiples of that original ten. And at the end of the eighteen years, the Crown Prince had determined to call together privately a Conferenz of corresponding secretaries, not, as he said in his circular, for the purpose of making any plans, — for, as he supposed, the great merit of our movement was that it never had any plans, — but that the secretaries might know each other by sight, and at least have the satisfaction of shaking hands. "If they did nothing else," said the Crown Prince, "they could show each other how they kept their record-books." So they assembled, — and, for four of Horace's suite I can testify, that, as we say down East, "they had an excellent time." But it was the queerest assembly that ever came together in that Kursaal.

Sailors from the Levantine ports, old long-robed men from Poland, who looked like Shylock, but were very unlike him, cloth-men from the depths of Germany, quiet Spanish scholars from the university cities, two quaint-looking school-masters from Holland, and nice stout men, who,

Alice is sure, were burgomasters. Then among all this white trash you might see Jamiesson himself, great quiet black man, a little overdressed, and his crew of all colors, — camel-drivers, pottery-men, wool merchants, cadis, and muftis. Mary Throop was there, looking in the face, for the first time, beys and effendis, with whose autographs she had been long acquainted, and talking, with smiles and with gestures, to people who spoke "Central Tartary" and "Turkey-in-Asia," but of other lingo knew none. All, save a herd of black-coated Americans, looked like a fancy ball, as Clara said, of a thousand people who still moved about as if they had all breakfasted together and were entirely confident in each other, and were never to part from each other again. At the first meeting, two or three hundred out of the thousand had each his record-book under his arm, — and on the old faded green of the tables, left in memoriam, you would see a Spaniard trying to explain to a Pole about his totals, his gratifying coincidences and his surprises, — holding up his fingers by way of count, and the Pole bowing, and sympathizing and saying, "Ah!" and "aussi," under the impression that "aussi" was Spanish for "yes." It was very funny to the eye, — for it was the Tower of Babel backwards. It was all languages and peoples united again under the empire of love.

No! They would not have any meeting for

speech-making, lest they should get into the old ruts. Only, on the day fixed for the first assembling, the Crown Prince made one very satisfactory speech, with occasional quotations of the four mottoes, pointing to them, which was cheered loudly by those who did not understand it, and equally loudly by those that did. Then, instead of the usual forlornity of a convention, they all fell to talking together, and a charming buzz arose. Dark-eyed secretaries from Bulgaria were seen talking to blonde secretaries with curls from the neighborhood of Fort Scott, in Kansas; a very business-like secretary from Oshkosh was caught talking, behind a door, with a very pretty Circassian secretary, who had brought her book all the way from Himry. The result of a week's rapid talking, with drives, and walks, and concerts, and picnics, was very great mutual confidence and regard among the secretaries, more, as Pauline thought and as Mabel agreed, than if they had all sat on uncomfortable settees eight hours a day for a week, and had discussed some resolutions that nobody cared a very great deal for. Only then there would have been so much more to put in the newspapers! And what is life good for, if you cannot put it into the newspapers?

Meanwhile, the secretary of state was at work with a detail of clerks furnished him by the home department, and the different secretaries brought in their books to him, and their totals were trans-

cribed and added, — and put into all sorts of tables in the most admirable way, so as to look quite as dull as, in reality, the miracles they described were exciting. And the result of the whole was that in the three last years the movement had gained TENFOLD! Each individual member seemed, on the average, to have brought in ten new members, or so nearly ten that the deaths in three years were made good with nine members more. The grand total increased the 107,413 members of three years before to 1,081,729! So soon as this was proved, a royal salute was fired from the old batteries. And that evening the court band performed for the first time a magnificent new symphony, by the great Rudolphssen himself, of which the theme was *Zehnmal Eins ist Zehn*, which was received with rapture by all who at all appreciated classical music. I am sorry to say some of the Chinese secretaries did not. But as there was not room for them to sit down they walked in the gardens in the moonlight. Of all which glories Bertha wrote full accounts to us, winding up, in immense letters, with what was everybody's motto and badge at Wiesbaden, —

TEN TIMES A HUNDRED THOUSAND IS A MILLION.

And so after a little of Switzerland, and a dash at Rome and at Naples, my girls came home. No, — no matter what secretaries they had met,

that is not part of the story. It had certainly been the most curious convention that ever was held; with no speeches except this by the Crown Prince, and instead of Resolutions, nothing but a Symphony. A convention which ended in a symphony! Nothing but a symphony! As I heard Kate — who had been to Trinity for she knew what — say, bitterly disappointed, that there was "nothing but prayers" there; — and as the pretty Baroness Thompson, when she returned from her wedding-tour, — when they had arrived at Niagara too late for the hops at the hotels, — told me, that there was nothing at Niagara but water! A convention with nothing but a symphony! But not so bad a convention after all.

For it sent all these secretaries home well convinced that there was much more in the movement than figures, — and that they and the cause they loved were lost if it were shipwrecked on statistics: — that dear Harry Wadsworth himself would be dissatisfied, even in Heaven, if he thought one of them was getting betrayed into preferring a method to the reality. "Love is the whole," said the Piscataquis Secretary to me, as he stopped at No. 9 with some letters from the girls; — and I know he went down to his Camp of Lumbermen more resolved than ever to lend a hand, — and some very noble things we heard from that Lumber Camp before the next year had gone by.

But I have forsworn detail. You see we are rushing to the end! From this great Conferenz the story of the movement is indeed mixed up with the larger history of the world. Only it was then that for the first time many in the movement, and many out of it, knew that there was any movement at all. A stone is thrown into the water, but who ever knows where, or if the sixth circle strikes the meadow-grass on the shore?

Nor did we hear of any Conferenz or Convention three years after, till it was too late for us. We went on in our quiet way. Life was purer and simpler and less annoyed to us, because constantly, now, we met with near and dear friends whom we had not known a day before, who looked up and not down, looked out and not in, looked forward and not backward, and were ready to lend a hand. Life seemed simpler to them, and it is my belief that to all of us, in proportion as we bothered less about cultivating ourselves, and were willing to spend and be spent for that without us, above us, and before us, life became infinite and this world became heaven.

But there was a Conferenz, though we did not know of it beforehand; — without taking down the dictionary I cannot tell what they called it. It was in one of the South Sea Islands, set a-going by some of George Dutton's Kermadeck people. They could not go to Wiesbaden, of course, and I believe the whole Pacific Ocean

had had but two representatives there. Their canoes could not double Cape Horn, they said. But when they heard the accounts of Wiesbaden, they all said, that for all its glories it was still true, — as Mr. Morris had made out, — that the earthly paradise was in their own beautiful ocean, — Pacific Ocean indeed, if any one understood the sublime prophecy in which it was named. So the bêche-de-mer people, and the seal-fishers, and the Nootka Sounders, and the birds'-nest men, and all sorts of Alexander Selkirks, and Swiss Families, and Peter Wilkinses, and Crusoes without a name, — all the Judds and Bishop Selwyns and Pitcairns Islanders fell to corresponding with each other, and organized their own celebration of the seventh triennial anniversary of the original club meeting. It was to be held on Christmas Island, for the name was of good omen; and as near as they could figure, that was near the centre of the Pacific, and on the whole equally convenient and inconvenient to everybody, — like a well-placed schoolhouse in the school district of a country town. Great correspondence they had with other secretaries, and great temptations they offered of bread-fruit and poe, and cocoanuts, and bananas, with actually unlimited supplies of guava jelly, to any who were carnally minded, if they would come. Great efforts they made to get some of the "original ten," and with such success that the Widow Corcoran went, and one of the Tidd boys,

and Widdifield, — and great heroes, I can tell you, they were too. And in every sort of craft the ocean bears, did the delegates from different groups arrive; from groups with names, and groups without them. As by those ocean currents the original cocoanuts were borne wafted in their husky boats; and every seed and every egg that has been needed since for the food of man or beast; so the delegates or secretaries came north, came south, came east, and came west to Christmas Island. And they held high festival there for many days. George Dutton was there, evidently no day older than he was when in California he ran for his life. Widdifield met college pupils of his, whom he had not seen since he preached in Newark in New Jersey. Mrs. Corcoran met some people from the Old Country who had been living in Honolulu for twenty years; but on conversation it proved that from their old home in Ballykeir they could see Stevie's Mount in the sunrise, which she, Mrs. Corcoran, always saw in the sunset, when, as a little girl, she came and went in Ballytullah; and though neither of them had ever gone to Stevie's Mount, by going round the world they had met here on Easter Day on Christmas Island. Strong representations from Japan were there, of those charming, mild-spoken, gentlemanly noblemen, and in the ardor of the movement, some of them had ventured to bring their sisters and their wives.

And there, too, they had their symphonies in their own kind, — though not after the fashion of the court-band of Carlsruhe. Symphonies in dancing, symphonies in canoes on still water behind guardian reefs, symphonies whispered in the ear, symphonies spoken in prayer to God by great congregations; — there was no want of symphonies and no want of harmony, though there was not a resolution or programme or preamble printed or voted for, nor so much as a cornet-à-pistons on the whole island. The secretaries had their books, tappa books and books of rice paper, books of cotton, books of seal-skin, books from America ruled by Leveridge and Stratton's compound, patent, self-adjusting double combination ruling-machine, and long rolls of parchment which some Muftis brought from beyond Muscat. And speculative secretaries and calculating secretaries lay for days with the books under fronds of giant ferns twenty feet high, yes, just as lovingly as the fairies lie under the maiden's-hair in the spring pasture, and calculated and copied, subtracted, transferred, cancelled, and added. Immense correspondence they opened from absent secretaries, and then calculated more, made more transfers and added more Then they filed the letters and went off to their dancing, or talking, or story-telling. Then the next day they met and calculated again, and more boats and ships brought more letters. And after two or three weeks the whole was put in the proper tables,

and the great law of "Ten Times One is Ten" was verified again. In only three years from the Conferenz at Wiesbaden it was made certain that the movement was represented by at least 10,934,127 members. There was immense jollification at the announcement, — a great international feast of two-finger and three-finger poe, with roast-beef, bêche-de-mer, birds' nests and guava jelly *ad libitum*. And when all had well feasted, George sent off his own lovely clipper yacht, the "Harry Wadsworth," which had taken the place long since of the shattered canoe, with a skipper who cracked on day and night to Hawaii, and telegraphed to the four continental secretaries only these words, "Ten million, nine hundred and thirty-four thousand, one hundred and twenty-seven." And the next morning, all over the world where there were newspapers, in the head-line of the "Personal" in the leading journals of the towns where were secretaries, there appeared in full-face Italic capitals these lines only, understood by the elect, if by no others: —

"TEN TIMES A MILLION IS TEN MILLION!"

That was the way in which the Christmas Island meeting and its results were first announced to me and to Polly. We had been at No. 3 for four or five months; and by misfortune all our letters from the Kermadeck Island had gone to D Street in Washington, because the Kermadeckers had

neglected to put "South Boston" on them. Then they had been sent back from the dead-letter office to the island, and when Dutton got home from the festival he found them there. Perhaps it did not make much difference, as, I suppose, none of us could have gone. But we should have been glad to make our own decision.

Before long, one and another letter came to us, describing what I have told to you; and soon enough, as you will see in the next chapter, the newspapers began discussing the Christmas Island meeting, and trying to find out whether it were a religious or an irreligious occasion. All the world was put in the way to learn all about it.

CHAPTER VIII, AND LAST

THE HAPPY WORLD

If you expect details now, you will be sadly disappointed; or, at most, the only details I will give shall be about my children, Alice and Bertha, and Clara and Pauline. Polly used to say reverently, that with such young folks, living as gladly as they lived, our little log-cabin home was the kingdom of heaven. Why not, indeed?

For, from the time they came back from Wiesbaden, nay, before, I never caught these girls worrying their lives out with any morbid self-inquiries. I dare not say they forgot they had

any souls; but I do say, that what with lightening their mother's cares and mine; with writing to Mary Throop and the Dalrymple girls; with mounting their pictures of the lake, and of the giant "flies," that they might be in time for Christmas presents; what with teaching the brickmakers' children how to knit, and how to spell, and how to play croquet, — and with the constant memory that there were thousands on thousands of other girls living the same lives, hoping the same hopes, and praying the same prayers, — these four dear girls never worried themselves about their own souls. The last curse of the spirit of selfishness disappeared, and so our home became the happy home of which I spoke.

Meanwhile the end comes, of course. For when ten million people are determined that the right thing shall come to pass in this world, having a good God on their side, they will always be found to have their own way. For reasons I have explained, the history becomes more vague. For we have now come to the period between 1879 and 1882, and the files of newspapers for that period, let us be thankful, are comparatively few. It was in the fall of 1879 that they gathered together under the fern leaves on Christmas Island.

But this *ten million* despatch gave spirit to all parties. And, over all the world, many a man and woman who had been talking prose all their lives and doing very commonplace things, began

to learn the great lessons, that it is in the long run much better to talk prose than to talk poetry, and that he who does commonplace things well, may be mastering the world. With the ten million despatch, I should say, there came for the first time the feeling that even by prose and by commonplace the world might be saved.

And for three years more, the three years between 1879 and 1882, the ten million people, each in his own home, were doing just what Harry himself did in the beginning. Only they had the feeling now that something was coming to pass which he never dreamed of, nor the Club of Ten, nor the Detroit Club. They did not put the "movement" into the newspaper; there was no "movement" to put in, — more than there was when Harry gave the Widow Corcoran her chips in the wood-shed. Still the great fact of the existence of the ten million could not well be kept out of the newspapers. And without dwelling on this period, I may just say that it was in these three years that the "movement," if it must be called so, went through the necessary crises of controversy.

Mr. Agassiz says that every great scientific truth goes through three stages. First, people say it conflicts with the Bible. Next, they say it had been discovered before. Lastly, they say they always believed it. Exactly this happened with the "movement." The first two stages came in in the three years between 1879 and 1882.

As soon as the magic words *TEN TIMES A MILLION IS TEN MILLION* appeared by direction of the local secretaries in the "Personal" of the daily newspapers, all the religious newspapers began inquiring into their meaning, and to ask whether there were not concealed some profligate attack on the Bible. The particularly bright religious journals got leaders out about it within a fortnight after the words appeared, — the others not so soon. This was not amiss, however, for the bright ones all proved that the words were very dangerous, and that a terrible plot against the church was concealed in them. This waked up the drowsy ones, and they did not like to own that they had been asleep. So they all said they did not think the words were dangerous; the only danger was in the columns of the wakeful journals. This gave our friends one-half the religious press as counsel for the defence; and as, in truth, the whole effort of all of them was in the simple line of the most unpretending Christianity, whenever any journal did try to rip up the constitution of a club, or to prove that Harry Wadsworth was a heathen, the effort generally came to grief of its own weight. There was a good deal of judicious comment on the dangers of secret societies, till it proved that none of the *ten million* people, as they came to be called, had formed any secret society. A good deal was said about log-rolling and mutual admiration societies. But on the whole it proved

that they had a distaste for politics, and that when they were in public life, they were men the public could not do without. Before many months, as it happened, a proposal was made in the English Parliament to omit the letter *u* from the spelling of "honour" in the English Bibles. And then on this question such a controversy arose in England as swept through the religious press of all the world, and this quite ended the "ten million discussion." Nothing more was ever said, so far as I ever heard, about the movement being hostile to the Bible.

But, on the other hand, a good many bright fellows, frontier bishops, secretaries of missionary societies, and such like, who were really trying in their own way to get the world forward if only they could find places for their levers, studied the bit of mathematics by which in twenty-one years seven zeros had been annexed to the *1*, which stood for Harry Wadsworth. They had the wit to see that this was much more substantial victory than all their tracts had yet won, — or any one of their embassies. They saw at the same moment that it was precisely the system on which all Christian victories have been won, — on which the hundred people of the *Mayflower* cabin had become so many millions to-day. Hundreds of these men were sharp-sighted enough and faithful enough to claim the ten million as their own allies; and at once there were published millions of tracts with such titles as —

"HENRY WADSWORTH proved a SANDEMANIAN." Published by the Sandemanian Board. Price one cent; one hundred and twenty-five copies for one dollar.

"TEN MILLION WITNESSES to the Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church." Published for gratuitous distribution, with the authority of the Rt. Rev. Henry Cairns. Minneapolis, 1880.

"REASONS which make it evident that HENRY WADSWORTH was a Unitarian Congregational Christian." Tract No. 97. Sixth Series. American Unitarian Association, Chicago, 1881.

"WADSWORTH A UNIVERSALIST. A Short Tract, by Hiram Ballou. For circulation." Publishing House, New York, 1880.

"The Standards Planted. An Affectionate Appeal to the Ten Million." Philadelphia. Presbyterian Union, 1880.

"Wesley's Class System vindicated in Wadsworth's Tens." Methodist Board. New York, 1880.

And even Rome did not neglect an occasion so tempting; but there appeared "Religious Liberty the Method of the Holy Church: an Address to those who believe in the Four Detroit Mottoes." Catholic Publication House, New York, 1880.

All of them were eager to make out that the four Detroit Epigrams belonged specially to their own communions, and that the ten million would advance their central purpose by coming meekly into their respective organizations.

It was true enough that dear Harry had profited

by all these people's books and plans. But Porter was all wrong, I am sorry to say, in pretending that Harry was a Sandemanian. The truth was, he was an officer of the Church of the Unity in Colchester; and as such, he was at liberty to get all he could from Pope or from Pagan. In that church they never asked what a man believed, but they expected him to believe it with all his might, and no mistake. If he believed in Christ enough to come to their communion table, they never sought an excuse to turn him away.

So these three years sped by, — first, in the endeavor to show that the ten million were the most irreligious of men and women, which they were not; second, in an attempt from all the foci of ecclesiastical order to show that they were the most religious of men. To my notion they were, — though perhaps not exactly as these several tract-writers supposed.

Anyway, religion or irreligion, the discussion did not help much and did not hinder much. The ten million were terribly in earnest, — just as much as the Original Ten were. Indeed, they were rather too much in earnest for any large scale frolic when the three years were over. I might say, rather, that in that summer, the summer of 1882, the whole civilized world seemed very much changed. Was it that so many men and women were caring for others more than themselves, and living for God's law and not for

the Devil's? Anyway, there was not a railroad accident in America or Europe that summer; Congress adjourned after a session of only three weeks, and most of the State legislatures after sessions of only three days. In the pretty country jails, they were taking summer boarders. None of the schools in America had any evening lessons. The daily newspapers all had feuilletons with continued stories in them, because they had neither murders, accidents, nor sensation trials. Coal was at half price, because they mined by machinery, and the workmen had forgotten the mystery of striking. There was not a village but had its daily afternoon jollification, with a play, or dance, or poem à la Morris, or charade, or picnic, or concert. And all life seemed such a frolic that nobody cared to go to Wiesbaden or to Christmas Island for a Conferenz or a Convention.

None the less did the local secretaries foot up their books and telegraph the result to Dalrymple in Norfolk. Dalrymple's hair was iron-gray now, but he stepped with a firm gait, and his voice rang out as cheerily as ever. With such telegraphs as 1882 worked, his communication even with Timbuctoo was easy. Every day he received some dozens of despatches from different capitals; and at last, late in October, he got a despatch from Irkutsk informing him that an express was in, from an outlying region of the Chalcha land among the Mongols. For this

express they had been waiting, before they could send in their totals. And Dalrymple reverently added the figures to the sum of all the other stations which he had cast before. That total was 99,998,180

The Irkutsk despatch gave 24,792

So the grand total was 100,022,972 souls.

Horace, dear old boy, touched a key of his table telegraph, and in five seconds the bells of Swaffham, and Cockley, and Aylsham, and Dereham, and Hingham, and Norwich, and for aught I know, of half England, were chiming with triple bob-majors and everything else that would express joy. Ten hours of joyful chiming in Norwich before they brought the bells home! Horace touched another key, and sent his private despatch to young Gladstone, who was then in his father's place as First Lord of the Treasury. In five seconds more the Tower guns were firing, — nay, in ten seconds an imperial salute was firing from every battery in that empire on which the sun never sets. Napoleon IV. did not get his despatch for five minutes. He was riding in the Bois de Boulogne, and the "repeat" did not find him. But the Home Minister got his, and took the responsibility of ordering the French salutes. So that when Napoleon did get the paper, he knew what it was before he opened it.

It was all an affair of seconds over the world, announced at sunset, sunrise, noon, or midnight,

according to your longitude. Our President then was a man you do not know, John Fisher. He was an enthusiast. And his arrangements for salutes were so perfect that he said there was not a capital city in America but knew the news sooner than Napoleon IV. had it. You see they had nothing to do, in those days, with the government stores of nitre and powder, but to burn it in jollification. So they burned it.

And thus it was an old story to most of the world when, the next morning, at the head of the "Personal" in the newspaper, men read —

TEN TIMES TEN MILLION IS A HUNDRED MILLION.

Dalrymple wrote me a philosophical letter this time. He confessed that he had been terribly frightened before the Irkutsk despatch came. As it was, he said, it was by the skin of our teeth we were saved. He bade me remark the falling off between 109,341,270, which, as he said, should have been the number, at the least, and 100,022,972, which it was. "It is all very well for the multitude," said he, "to say, 'ten times ten million is a hundred million,' and that is, thank God, one of the eternal truths. But, for all that, we have not gained tenfold in these three years. We have fallen off badly. So much for the quarrels of your Dominies. All the time we were sticking fast on the great Roll at those ninety-seven

millions and ninety-eight millions that filled up so slowly, my heart was in my throat. I lost my appetite, and could not hit a partridge if I tried. I tell you a million people are a great many. And when that plucky Tchitchakoff's bulletin came in, Fred, I could have kissed him. But, for the love of dear Harry, let us have no more quarrelling among you padres!"

And why were all these salutes fired, the world over? Why was every capital illuminated? Why was there a holiday given to every school? Half-holidays had been the universal custom for years before. It was simply, you see, that a tenth part of the people in the world had shown in some way worth belief that they meant —

To look up and not down,
To look forward and not back,
To look out and not in, — and
To lend a hand.

I say one tenth, in round numbers. We did not know in 1882 exactly how many people there were in the world. But we had subdued some estimates, and we had swelled some, and we "conceited" that there were rather more than a thousand million men, women, and children the world over. We had one estimate as high as 1,228,000,000, and this was, for want of a better, taken by the statistical men as the true one. It was roughly said that a tenth part of these were those little children of whose like is the kingdom

of heaven, who are not yet profaned by contact with earth, or who, at all events, cannot be pledged to any line of duty. If this were so, there were, in round hundreds, one thousand one hundred million sentient, sensible, and responsible people in the world, say over three years old. Now one tenth of these, as I said, were willing to live for the company rather than themselves. This willingness started this rejoicing. Of course a minority so large as that, practically agreeing on a few principles, ruled absolutely the larger majority. When but one man in thirteen was a Christian in the Roman Empire, Constantine found it politic to proclaim Christianity.

But we meant no such flash in the pan as Constantine's proclamation. We had not seen the club of ten enlarge to the hundred million in less than a generation to stop there. Indeed, the ten meanest men among those Chalcha people was as much in earnest as any of us of the Original Ten, that this world, and nothing less, should be put on a few simple principles, such as Jesus Christ lived for and died for. No man said anything about this. The quarrels of the Dominies had cured us of talk and of new methods. Every man and woman understood that there was no short cut nor patent process. We saw that the thing must spread by contagion if it spread at all. Still, though no man said anything, I can tell you the interest became intense, almost terrible

sometimes, as those next three years whirled by.

You see at first these hundred million people were very unequally divided. Commerce, adventure, and all that, had scattered them a great deal, but still there were favored points and points not favored. There were whole villages where, as far as you could see, almost every man held loyal to the Four Mottoes, where you were fairly tempted to say that God's own kingdom of love had come, just as you are tempted to say that of some Homes you and I know of.

But these people, if they really meant "to lend a hand," could not stay in any such four-square Sybaris as that. Indeed they would stifle there for want of vital air and of exercise. They could not say their prayers there, indeed. What use in praying "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," if they, the very work-people to whom God had entrusted the work of the world, were doing nothing about it? And of course, as they looked out and not in, and forward and not backward, they did not satisfy themselves with making a contribution in church to help send one man in a black frock coat and a white neck-cloth to do this thing for them. They went themselves in great companies. That was the new school of missions which built up the new civilization — unless you remember Lord Baltimore, and Winthrop, and the *Mayflower*, or perhaps go back to Isocrates and Herodotus, and

say it was the old school of missions. A new Sybaris, say better a new Nazareth, would plant itself right in the midst of a horde of Gauchos, with rifles enough to make itself respected, — yes, but with dolls and rattles enough for the Gaucho babies, bread and butter enough for the Gaucho women if there were famine, and in general love enough to tame any Gaucho chief who was not very thick-skinned. All over the world you saw such clusters of young people going from worn-out soils to the virgin soils, or from the new lands to the historical; Old and New playing into each other's hands, and, by wonderful combinations, taking tricks which had been thought impossible before.

Then you began to see the old line of public appeal exactly changed. The advertisement became the appeal of generosity instead of the plea of selfishness.

From the New York Herald.

A MOTHER and her daughter, without encumbrance, would gladly know where they can be of use. One of them was in Mrs. Emerson's school, and they have had the advantage of personal acquaintance with two of the Original Ten. Address M. and D., Herald Office.

FIVE young men, who graduate this summer at Cornell, would like to go to any part of the world where they are needed. Will bear their own expenses. Have heard the lectures of Mr. Widdifield, and the brothers Corcoran.

A WIDOW with four children will take into her family a paralyzed woman, or any blind person. Two sons good at lifting invalids. No charge for board or washing. Address LAUNDRESS.

From the New York Observer.

DISTANCE no objection. Seven families, all the members of which are in good health and have lived together without quarrelling for seventeen years, will gladly go together to any outpost. None of them ever believed in total depravity. Address the Editor of this Journal.

SEVEN languages! Four gentlemen with their wives, in whose number are good interpreters in seven languages, are ready to sail at a moment's warning. No charge or salary. Have met personally five of the Original Ten. Address F. O. U. R.

DETROIT Club. Eleven members of the original Detroit Club, with their families, wish to correspond with reference to duty. From an experience of twenty-four years, they are sure that they shall arouse no animosity among any Christians. Inquire of the Editor of the Observer.

THE graduates of Humboldt College, Iowa, of the present Senior Class — three hundred and seven in number — offer themselves for duty. Can work their way as stokers if necessary. They belong to one hundred and seven religious sects, and are yet to know their first dissension. If necessary, two hundred and ninety-four ladies can accompany them. Address Senior, Springvale, Humboldt, Iowa.

And so on, and so on. These are only a few out of hundreds. And they are enough to show you how the world is really turned round when the people in it, instead of inquiring first about what they shall eat and drink, are inquiring first how the kingdom of God shall come.

And I promise you, with such practical use of the machinery of daily life, the kingdom could be seen coming. The enlargement of the world, or of man's intercourse in the world, of course all the time made the world smaller. The telegraphs, the journeys back and forth to old homes, the enlargement of means of life and love, as the old war establishments were put down and the old taxes forgotten, all these things brought Irkutsk and North Colchester very near each other, and it no longer seemed strange to find Harry's portrait in a sledge as you drove across the Baikal.

Indeed, I believe that any true history of those years would show that the greatest difficulties were not among these distant people. For the first time in history, we began to get interesting letters from the outposts. You see, these people, not looking in, but looking out, did not have to tell us much of their own headaches, or heartaches, or bellyaches, but were able to devote all their pen, ink, and paper to the things that they saw, which we at home wanted them to describe. They dealt largely with simple people, and it sometimes seemed as if their accounts were of a

"nation in a day," as the hymn says, though really they caught all their converts with the hook, and not in a net. It was not on the outskirts that the last difficulties were found. But as every man finds that the hardest knots he has to chop through are those which have been waiting in his own wood-shed while easier work was done, so it proved now, that the very hardest jobs of all were in some of the home stations, in breaking up hard-pan which we had been for generations trampling down.

Just one story of such difficulty and the whole history of victory may be brought to an end.

It was in the spring of the last of those three years. Everything seemed happy, smooth, contented, vigorous, and wise. Those of us who were in the "movement" — and who indeed was not? — could not find man, woman, or talking child, this land through, who was not somehow or other showing practical sympathy with us. I think it was rather as a jollification, than to point out any new line of work, that the "Reformed Association of Covenanters of the New Lanark Platform" held their great decennial convention at Sherman City. This, you know, was one of the most important ecclesiastical gatherings that we could have in this country. The newspapers had so little else to tell that they all had reporters there. Seven hundred clergy and fourteen hundred lay delegates were in attendance. The meeting was held in a Rink with temporary seats, so that

everything seemed to promise a happy time. Never did a more plucky or manly set of fellows bear cross on their shoulders than the men I knew who were in that Convention. By way of doing honor to age, and experience, and learning, old Dr. Philpotts had been appointed president, and he was to preach the opening sermon.

Imagine, then, the haggard dismay of all parties, — press, town, delegates, everybody, — when the old gentleman gave out his text, "And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" and proceeded, in the most systematic way, to "pitch in" to the four Detroit mottoes! First, he should show that it was impossible for a regenerate man to look up, and that his duty was to look down. "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Second, he should show that every regenerate man must look backward rather than forward. "Remember the days of darkness." Third, he should show that every regenerate man must commune first with his own soul. "While I was musing, the fire burned." Fourth, and lastly, that all the dangers at which he had hinted were slight indeed compared with that Covenant of Works in which men were tempted to suppose that they could advance or hinder the Creator's plans. "A fox shall break down their stone wall." If you live to 1885, you will, perhaps, fall in with this celebrated sermon in print. I spare you the detail, therefore. About the close there was no "if."

"You have observed, my friends, that I have considered the fittest subject of our meditations on this occasion to be a series of fascinating errors, which have led astray a few giddy young men, in the thought or hope that they had found out a better Gospel! Let us all hope that these straws of human harvesting may be blown away even as chaff by the wind of the Infinite Spirit. For myself, as the representative of this august assembly, — though these were to be my last words, — looking round upon the sacrilegious mottoes which deform and deface the Hall in which we are assembled, I declare that I will never accept them as principles of conduct — never, never, never!" And with this outburst he sat down.

In fact, when Vittermayer had painted the Rink in real Fresco, he had wrought in the four mottoes on the four walls. By this time they were so universal that you saw them everywhere.

People were aghast! There was not a human being in the assembly, except the good old Doctor, who was not up to his eyes in the determination that this world should be made a world of Faith, Hope, and Love. So indeed was he. But he had found it necessary to make his individual and loyal protest against the way things were going on, because they were rather different from the way he supposed they went on in the Covenanters' time. There was a horrid hush for a

moment, and then Wilderspin stepped forward and gave out, —

"Had I the tongues of Greeks and Jews,"

to be sung by the congregation. They sang it with a will, and blew off steam a little so. Wilderspin invoked a benediction, and they went sadly home.

Then began synods, and committees, and every sort of mutual conference, to make the old Doctor back down. "Think how it will sound among those nice Bamangwato people," said my Pauline, and everybody had some like feeling. But the old man was flint. They got him to say in a letter that in a modified sense a Christian might look up to God without stepping off the platform of the Reformed Covenanters, which was the great object with him, — then that he might forget himself without dangerous sin, — and that he even ought to look forward to a happier future; but, *as* to "lending a hand," never! cried the old man. It is a Covenant of Works, and union with the Devil.

So sadly came the October in which we had hoped so much. All the other secretaries reported a world subdued by Love. In all the other continents men had found some way to express this Love, and the Faith and Hope which were intertwined with it. All princes and all people were hoping and praying that as October passed away, one joyful signal, the world over, might

show that the horrors of old history were sealed in one tomb, and that in one unanimous heart-beat, a world of self-forgetting men would begin to live as one hearty family of God! But here was one man, who with the noblest motive cried out, "Never, never, never!" Whatever else might happen, he would never say he would "lend a hand."

The thirty-first day of October dawned. I will confess that it was a sad day. Newman wrote me that to him it was a bitter morning. He had been all the evening before discussing the Monophysite heresy with Dr. Philpotts. "I had forgotten the hated names," wrote poor Newman, and so had led round to the beauty of Unity among Brethren, to which the old man had assented sweetly; and then Newman had asked timidly if, with a change of the language, he could not bring his heart to agree to "do good as he had opportunity." "Covenant of Works!" said the old Trojan, "Never, never, never!" So Newman went home, and so waked sadly. A sad breakfast. None of them could get to work. And Newman wrote me that he thanked God even when he heard the fire-alarm strike, because it was an excuse for him to leave his study.

But when he came to the district, he bitterly rued that selfish thought. The fire was a sudden and bad one. It was already checked below, but smoke was pouring up and out of the attic windows of the warehouse or factory where it had

been burning. It proved to be a factory of paper boxes, and the pasting women in the attics were stifling from the smoke. They lay out on the steep roof with their feet stayed in the gutters when Newman came there. Davis and Flaherty were moving heaven and earth to bring their ladders to the eaves, — and did so; but no man could stand the smoke as he ran up, — far less did those poor girls dare to risk it coming down. Newman told me he saw five fellows in succession dash up Flaherty's ladder, waver, and lose their heads, and drop senseless into the arms of the crowd below. At last flames began to break out of the fourth story window, and to lap and lick up the outside of the building. Three minutes, and the whole would be over, — when a tall man in his shirt-sleeves ran boldly down the slope of the roof of the church next the factory, by an easy spring jumped across the five-foot chasm between the buildings, walked like a cat to the dormer behind which these five girls were crouching, and then could be seen leading them, lifting them, encouraging, and then actually carrying one along the giddy gutter-edge, till he had led them all to the more sheltered side upon which he had sprung. Davis had caught the idea already; and by the time that last faint child was on that side, Davis himself was at his ladder's top to take her. One, two, three, — all five passed down, — and then Shirt-sleeves, as the crowd called him, sprang back across the gulf to the church roof;

and running up the slates to the tower, slipped in, and disappeared.

The whole throng was cheering and yelling. The girls were taken, I know not how, — and tended I know not by whom. Everybody but Davis and Flaherty seemed to forget the fire, and Newman found himself (as I suppose every one did) asking who Shirt-sleeves was, and where he had gone. The general impression was, seeing he had come down from the steeple, that he was an angel in shirt-sleeves. Talk grew loud at the church door, which proved to be locked. At last the fussy, lazy sexton appeared on the steps, trying, by his air, to make people think that he was virtually the hero of the occasion, though he had not happened to do that particular deed. "Hannay," cried Newman, "is that you? who was the man, — where is he?"

"Locked up in his study," said Hannay; "sees no one till office hour."

"Study?" cried Newman; "who do you say it is?"

"Why, don't *you* know?" says Hannay. "Guess you don't see him in his shirt-sleeves as often as I do. He saws all the wood for the furnace fires. Why, it is the old Doctor!"

Newman turned to the crowd, waved his hand, and cried, "Three times three for Dr. Philpotts!" And did they not cheer well?

Yes, the stanch old theologian, who would have died before he would accept a "Covenant of

Works," had risked his life without one anxious thought for those five girls. "A trick I learned when I was unregenerate," he said afterwards. "I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, and had some duties to discharge in taking the tongue out from the chapel bell."

And the Sherman City papers stopped the press and put in EXTRAS to announce: "Gallantry of Dr. Philpotts." "Dr. Philpotts *lends a hand.*" And the local secretary telegraphed to the Middle States secretary, and he telegraphed to the Central Union secretary, and he telegraphed to Dalrymple, —

"Dr. Philpotts has lent a hand."

And this was all anybody was waiting for. And before noon of that day, the Brothers in Unity at Fort Grant were firing a salute from the two cannon left for that purpose, so that when the Doctor's study was open at his office hour, he and all men knew that the whole world was One. The old gentleman was overwhelmed with visitors. He received their congratulations and thanks cordially, but said, "I have not acceded, and I never will accede, to a Covenant of Works."

That day the whole world held festival. All schools were dismissed, — all banks and workshops and factories closed, — all "unnecessary labor suspended," as the great salutes and the great chimes came booming out, which announced the agreement of a world of self-forgetting men.

That day, do I say? Every day from that day was festival, — century after century. So soon as the world once learned the infinite blessing of Active Love, and stayed it by Faith, and enjoyed it in Hope, there was no danger that the world should unlearn that lesson.

That lesson — if this vision of a possibility prove true — comes to the world by no change of law; by no new revelation, nor other gospel than the world has now. It comes simply as man after man and woman after woman lead such unselfish lives, as all of us see sometimes, as all would be glad to live, as dear Harry Wadsworth led while his short life went on.

Nine triads of years were enough each to add a zero to the figure which stood for that one man.

Ten times one was ten, $10 \times 1 = 10$. There was one zero.

But as the nine zeros were added, in twenty-seven years the *1* became 1,000,000,000 — ONE THOUSAND MILLION.

This proved to be the number of the Happy World!

NEITHER SCRIP NOR MONEY

NEITHER SCRIP NOR MONEY

[CAROLINE LETITIA TALLANT. — When I wrote "Ten Times One is Ten," there were "ten persons nearest to me in the work of life," whom I was fond of calling "my ten," when we spoke of that book. One of them read the proofs of every chapter, and, in his exquisite sympathy and perfect literary taste, gave me the help most dear to a writer. In this case, too, he was the person from whom I had learned more than from all my other teachers put together. Another was Caroline Letitia Tallant, who for many years directed the charities of our church. For many more she had been at work with me, or intimate in my family. Both these are now in the other life. She died on the sixth day of November, 1877. In an effort to make real some of the lovely traits of one of the noblest women who ever lived, I wrote this little sketch. I believe its association with her will give it an interest for all members of the Wadsworth Club. They will understand what I mean, when I say that, in the original sketch of the story of "Ten Times One is Ten," she is the "Mary Throop." "One of the real steady-going people she, capable of immense enthusiasm, all the more because she never shows any, — no, though you put her on the rack, and pull her tendons asunder, — the approved way of awaking enthusiasm." She is the person who "took Asia."]

CHAPTER I

GIVING A DAY

I MEAN to call her "Irene," because Irene means peace.

You might call her "Letitia," because Letitia means joy.

Or you might call her "Caroline," because Caroline means some one who is not very large but is very dear.

Or you might call her "Speranza," because that means hope. Or "Charis:" Charis is a pretty name, and means Divine love.

But I shall call her "Irene," because that means peace.

She had arranged for all her Christmas presents. Some of them she had arranged last summer, when she was away, — off in the edge of the mountains. She was not apt to be flurried or worried; and so, when St. Victoria's Day closed, all her regular Christmas presents were bought or made and put up in silver paper and labelled. "Silver paper," dear Fanchon, is the old-fashioned name for "tissue paper." Irene liked to make her presents with her own hands. "When I have manufactured my present," said she, "I feel as if I gave a piece of myself to my friend."

St. Victoria's Day, as you did not know, Dick, is the second day before Christmas. I am glad you did not interrupt. If you do not interrupt, all will be made clear in time.

So the last day before Christmas broke bright on Irene, and it was a holiday at the school she kept, so that she need not go there; and while all the rest of us were hurrying round madly in a wild frenzy, losing our lists of presents and buying by mistake three for grandmother and none for grandfather, she was at peace at breakfast,

and at peace after breakfast to write a very jolly Christmas letter to Amelia; and at peace when Walter and Fergus and Matthew and Lothian flitted off on their skating-party. She saw they had their mittens and their scarfs, and stood on the piazza as they went off, and looked out on the faultlessly clear sky.

"I mean to give the day to somebody for a Christmas present," said Irene to herself. "I do not know who it will be; but let us see what will come of it." So she dressed herself for walking, and started. As she arrayed herself, she put her blunt scissors in her pocket; and when she started she took a roll of paper. She put street-car tickets in her pocket, but never scrip nor purse did she take; and as for staves, she had not even one. She was not going to give money from the purse, — no, nor food from the scrip. "It is the day I will give," said she — aloud this time — "or what there is left of it." And she put down the latch, left the house empty, and started.

If the people wished to ring that door-bell that day, why, they might ring, — that was all! There was nobody it would hurt within. But I think some people like to ring door-bells for the love of it. So they were happy that day.

Now, you must know that Irene was a person around whom romances were as sure to gather as ever they did around Amadis of Gaul, or Darioleta, or Blanchefleur, or Huon of Bordeaux. She

never sat in a street-car but the woman next her told her her whole story; and she could not give a tramp a cup of coffee but he told her such a tragedy or comedy of the earlier adventures of his life as would make five good acts on any stage in the world. Accordingly, so soon as the car was well under way, and she had taken her first look at its picture-gallery; as soon as she had compared the face of the hatchet-faced man against the vinegar-faced woman's, — the moon-faced girl's against the spoony boy's, — Mrs. McGoffin, who, as was preordained, sat next to Irene, moved up to her and said in one breath, —

"Lady, did ye chance to know any one who wanted to hire a good square room three story front with open fireplace, 'n though I say it who should not, there 's not a nicer 'n a neater 'n a sweeter room in the South Cove. It 's number ninety-nine Needy Street, lady."

Irene was interested at once, liked Mrs. McGoffin's way, was not sorry to have the chance of getting round the department of "Wants" in the newspaper, where much of her charity-money went, and felt that this was indeed a "more excellent way," if it had only happened that Mrs. McGoffin had addressed a person needing a room by the intervention of some helpful demiurge. Rapidly in her mind Irene ran over the list of her most needy protected ones, for Irene was the lady protector of what the ungodly would call a ragged regiment; but there was no one of that

host whom even her kindness would remove to Mrs. McGoffin's third-floor front. All she could do was to take out her tablets and make sure of ninety-nine Oneida Street. She had learned this invaluable lesson from Mr. Woodward, the champion carer for poor people: to write down all you can learn of everybody, from the Pope on his throne down to Smoky Pipe in his wigwam, and index carefully if you ever mean to serve them. How many chances in life are lost because people have forgotten, or have not indexed well!

So she said to Mrs. McGoffin that she must keep up a good heart, that perhaps something would open; and Mrs. McGoffin returned by giving her her blessing, such as it was; and then Irene stopped the car, and found herself in Concord Street. By this time she was quite resolved to take a companion. "Two by two is the rule," she said, "and I was wrong to think of breaking it." To tell the truth, she was mortal, and she had felt within herself that there would be many comforts in being alone; but Mrs. McGoffin, or I know not what, had put her on another mood than that of lonely comfort, and so she turned into Dunrobin Court and rang at the attic-room bell in No. 7; and Rudolf himself came down to answer the bell. And his great heavy face beamed when he saw Irene. And she spoke to him rather slowly, and asked him if he did not want to take a walk with her.

Take a walk with her! If an angel from

heaven had asked him to take a fly, he would not have been so happy. He might have been mortally afraid of an angel, or of flying, — I am afraid I should be, — but he knew he could walk, and he was not afraid of Irene. I never heard of anybody who was, unless it were a detected tramp who had squandered his order for sugar at a liquor-shop, and had not reported to shovel the snow from the sidewalks, as he had said he would. Common people — middling sort of people, like you and me — were never afraid of Irene. "Could he go to walk?" That he could. His father was at home because the election was over, and so all the men in the street department were dismissed, their votes not being needed till next December. So his father could sit and see that the old grandmother did not tumble into the fire, and Rudolf was free to go and walk with the angel. She bade him be quick, and he was quick; and they went now directly to the City Hospital.

The boy jabbered, now broken English, and now very fluent German; and Irene spoke, now in very broken German, and then in very careful English. He had a deal to tell her about his grandmother and his father, and a Christmas letter that had come from Blankenheim in Baden. Some people think Rudolf is underwitted; I believe they thought so at school, where he was kept, a great big lout, in the highest class of the primary with little chits half his size. I don't

think so: I think his heart is a good deal bigger even than his great big head, and that he is of very slow development. That is a kind which the primary school does not like, but I believe the good Father and all good angels like them as much as any. So he chattered away; and Irene made herself as young as he, and chattered too. And so they came to the porter's lodge of the hospital.

I do not know if it was visitors' day. It made no difference: they all knew Irene; and she smiled pleasantly, and nodded, and passed right through, just as if she were a doctor. And so she led the wondering Rudolf, now along the curved path between the winter-girt shrubs, then up the splendid steps, then left and then right, and then straight and then crooked, and then up two flights till they came to the children's ward on the surgical side. Irene had hit on these children first as those to whom she would give her Christmas present of that day.

And the nurses were glad to see her. And up came, on the instant, a little tot, — oh, not six years old! with one arm tied to her side, not very well balanced as she walked, — and took her right hand from her mouth to give it to Irene, and was in her lap as soon as she was seated on the bed. Here was one old friend. "And who else is here?" asked Irene. And so Bridget had to point out, rather dumbly, the boy in bed with both feet crushed; the little girl who had fallen

down the cellar-stairs and had broken her leg; the little boy whose face had been cut open by a brickbat; and the girl whose apron had taken fire, and whose arms were burned so badly. And of course there was John, — John was always there.

"Well," said Irene, "I think I must make the boys some horses and dogs; and I will make you a pig and a goat; and you must show this little girl how to cut out boys and girls. I think Miss Anderson will lend us some more scissors. And, Rudolf, suppose you read them 'Cinderella;' for here is 'Cinderella' in my pocket."

And so it was. They took station at the foot of the beds of the two who could not walk. They put rests under their backs, so that they could use their hands, and Miss Anderson provided chairs for all who could sit; and three pairs of scissors appeared for all who could cut, and a bed-table appeared on each bed; and then whole armies of blue horses and red horses, yellow cows and green cows, purple boys and orange girls, white, gray, and black goats and cats and pigs, began marching to and fro on the tables at the soft or stronger breath of the delighted children. And Rudolf, in a higher chair, read — and read very well — of mice changed into horses, and lizards into footmen. If anybody knew or cared what lizards were, or what footmen were! Nobody knew, nobody cared, and nobody asked; and none the less cheerily did the reading go on.

And for an hour these five children, who had been restless and tired and blue all the morning, were happier than kings, — all because Irene had come in. And though Irene went away then, they were very jolly all the afternoon. For Irene lent Bridget her scissors, and she left all those sheets of colored paper, and she told Rudolf that he might leave the book with the tall boy on crutches who had condescended to hobble down to the gathering. So the children had Bluebeard and Aladdin and the rest, and made armies of four-legged people and two-legged people, and people of many legs, before the day was done.

Why Irene went away so soon was this: There came upstairs, from one of the lower wards, a man who looked pale through all the olive of his face, with coarse Indian hair, rather undersized, but still with a firm military walk, which you would notice even in our nation of soldiers. He, too, had had a broken arm, but to-day he was discharged as cured. The man was a Russian. His accident had befallen him on shipboard; he had been brought direct to the hospital, and he knew never a man nor a place in the town. Poor fellow! he could n't speak ten words of English. The doctors had spoken to him in German, in which he could just make himself understood; and now he had come up to Miss Anderson because she could speak a little German, to know where, in the great forlornity of a strange city,

he should pack himself away. Of course Miss Anderson beckoned to Irene; people always beckoned to Irene when things were limping. Her German was no better than the Tartar's. And I have always observed that in speaking a language two halves do not make one whole. But among them they understood that the man wanted to know where he was to live cheaply and simply till he found his place. God knew what that place was to be, but certainly nobody else did. This was Irene's thought. And then, in all that followed about his chest, and his wages, and the captain, and the ship, and the consul, and the vice-consul, Irene's German and Miss Anderson's German, born of Goethe and bred by Schiller, broke wholly down. For there is nothing about seamen's chests in Wallenstein, and nothing about vice-consuls in the Morphologie.

Then it was that Rudolf came to the front. Now it appeared for what purpose in this world he was foreordained. The Russian made him understand, and he made Irene understand; and so they bade the children good-bye. And Irene, who from the first had determined that Mrs. McGoffin's spare room was foreordained for the Russian, was under way again with him and with Rudolf, for number ninety-nine "Needy" Street. By this time Rudolf was chattering with the Northern bear, and Irene had her thoughts for her companions after they had crossed to Shawmut Avenue and had taken seats in the car.

This time the portrait-gallery opposite was hung with quite another set of faces. There was a tender, foreign-faced woman in a sealskin sack talking eagerly to Mr. Brooks Phillips. Of course everybody in Boston knew him. On the other side another lady sometimes interrupted and sometimes suggested. "Perhaps they are going to a Christmas-tree," said Irene to herself, "and perhaps again they are going to the celebration of Adam and Eve to-day." For be it known to you, Dick, who are so rusty in your calendar, that the day before Christmas is Adam and Eve's Day. Beyond them, stringing along upon the seat, were five Roxbury Latin School boys, as the legends on their caps made sure. Their knees were piled with baskets and white-paper parcels. It was clear enough where they were going. Dover Street disturbed the party a little, and some people going to the Asylum disturbed it more. And when Irene herself rose with her party at Castle Street, she saw in the straw for the first time a dainty pink package which she had last seen in the lap of one of Mr. Phillips's friends. That lady had left already. Irene considered a moment. "No," she said to herself, "I will not give it to the conductor; that will be too late for Christmas. I can find her somehow in time." So she stopped at Mr. Prescott's, and left a wood-order with him, and then they came back to Oneida Street.

Feodor Ivanovitch was taken up to Mrs.

McGoffin's. With due dumb show, with an oration in Russian by him, very loud and very slow, with an oration in Irish by her, very loud and very fast, — by the payment in advance of a dollar and a quarter on his part, and due mediation on the part of Rudolf and Irene, — a mutual unwritten covenant was made.

Then the Russian bear had to start upon his travels in search of the chest, and the vice-consul, the ship-master, and the consul. Irene bade Rudolf take him in tow, wrote for them at the corner store some necessary addresses, made Rudolf explain to the other that he must give him the money for car-tickets, and saw them well away. "Two by two," she said, "that is the rule."

CHAPTER II

LOST AND FOUND

"Two by two," she said aloud, as the car swept away with them, "that is the rule." Nor did she hesitate this time, more than before, as to her companion. In a very few minutes, — quicker than you think possible, Araminta, — Jeannie Fraser was invited, had accepted, had girt herself in her best, and was on the sidewalk with Irene. She was a nice, blooming Scotch lassie of fourteen; glad indeed of the emancipation which Irene's

genius had organized and made possible for her. And she had a thousand questions to ask and a thousand to answer, as they worked their way across the Common and Public Garden to find the Hotel Bonheur, and Mr. Brooks Phillips.

Irene knew by this time what a responsibility she had taken in keeping the pink parcel. For if Mr. Phillips had not gone directly home, she could not find out where the owner lived. Then, where was all her fine theory that she should be more prompt than the conductor? But Irene was not afraid. "Fortune favors the brave," she said to Jeannie, to whom she expounded the object of this expedition.

Another terror deep in Irene's heart she did not even lisp to Jeannie. How if Mr. Phillips, talking so pleasantly to the right and left, did not know who either of the sealskin-coat ladies were? How if they had presumed on the certain memory of a great public man, and had given him no chance to say to either, "Madam, I do not know you from Celestina or from Boadicea"? Then where would her pink parcel go? This terror she did not lisp of. She only said aloud, "Fortune favors the brave."

And fortune did favor her. Mr. Phillips was at home, and was all interested. He knew both the ladies, and knew that both of them were going home. They had all three been together at the Annual Meeting of the "Society for Providing Occupation for the Higher Classes." He

did not know which lady had the pink parcel; but in a minute he wrote down both addresses, and Irene and Jeannie could start on their winding way. But in that minute he had taken her measure as one of the people worth knowing in the world; and she had had the vigor and comfort that there always is when one strong and sensible person talks for sixty seconds with another.

So she walked quickly up the Beacon-street Mall, climbed the steps, sent in her card to Mrs. Donne, and was instantly ushered in, — Jeannie timidly following, because she did not know where she should stay, — into one of those grand, large, old-fashioned parlors which look out on the Common, and when there was a Back Bay, looked across it to the Blue Hills. The Bay is gone, but the Blue Hills remain; and just in the sunlight of that lovely afternoon the cheerful view of winter made one forget that winter could ever seem dreary.

On a long lounging-chair in the great, cheerful bow-front lay a pale, tall man with the "Rundschau" in his hand. Irene noticed it, in the moment while Mrs. Donne stepped forward to greet her. She told her errand in the next moment, though she knew before she spoke that the parcel was not Mrs. Donne's. She was not the one. And so that lady said. It must have been Mrs. Herbert's parcel, though Mrs. Donne had not noticed it in her hand.

"She is not far away," said Irene cheerfully.

"I hope you do not think this is very foolish in me, but I should hate to have one of my Christmas presents miscarry."

"Foolish?" said the other. "I was thinking," — and she blushed peony, and struggled with her own audacity, — "I was thinking that the mysterious present will have a double value now, — because two kind people have a share in it."

How had she ever said it! She had never said so bold a thing since she was a courageous schoolgirl, and had told Mr. Torrey to his face that she thought he had scanned a line wrong.

For Mrs. Donne was a pure "Bostoneer" of sixteen quarterings. They say no one is so proud; which is probably true. It is also true — when the blood is purple and genuine, and the woman conscientious and living in the higher life — that nobody is so shy. And that she, Elizabeth Donne, should have made such a speech to a perfect stranger, was to herself one of the miracles of the nineteenth century, — though she was glad she had made it. This was the reason why she had blushed peony.

After she had once made it, the ice-floe between these two women was broken forever, and ground into the smallest kind of ice-dust; and the dust was swept off by the great current of God's love into the infinite ocean, and was swept all away. And so from that moment to this moment these two great-eyed women have looked into the depths of each other's soul, and have

known each other and loved each other through and through, and will forever.

For just as Irene was blushing too, and saying good-bye, Elizabeth Donne, wild with her new courage, and rushing blindly forward to conquer other worlds, said, "Please wait one minute: tell me, were you not speaking German to that sick man beside you in the car? Was he a German?"

Irene explained that she was only helping, as she could, in the German; but that the man was a Russian.

"Russian!" with a quick, sharp tone that made even Irene start, though she was not used to starting: "did you say Russian, madam?"

It was the pale man on the lounge, who had before lain quiet and all-but unobserved. Irene explained in an instant who the Russian was, and told why she had had him for a moment under her convoy.

"Then you know where he is now?"

Yes: she knew, — or knew where she had left him. She had sent him with the boy Mrs. Donne saw on the errand he had to do, and he would be at his new home as soon as these were ended.

"Did he seem a — well, could he read, or was he a common sailor?"

"I could not guess," Irene said, "what he was. He could read, for he could write; and I noticed that his handwriting was manly and firm. The letters he showed me were a gentleman's letters. They were neat and neatly kept. They

were evidently written by some one whose English handschrift," and she laughed, "was as bad as my German is; but I thought no worse of them for that."

"I was wondering," said the sick man almost eagerly, "if he could read Russian into German or into Swedish even." He said this with a sort of wistful expression, which only an invalid can use or can understand.

"Swedish," said Irene; "perhaps Swedish. His German — well, his German is as bad as mine."

"You see," said poor Mr. Donne, rousing up with a little of an invalid's feeling that he is the only important person in the world, "these people at Hamburg, — Perthes's people, you know, — they have sent me out this collection of Philarete's sermons, and they have sent these new poems by Glinka, and here they have sent these new novels of Senkoffski's, and there is a story of Dahl's, all in Russian, of which I cannot even read the characters. Of course, you know, I can send them all back: I suppose, indeed, I ought to. I suppose they meant to send them to somebody else, — somebody who knew something, — but one hates to lose a good chance. You know — well, they seem to be thrown in my way. And if there is anything good to read in the world, or anything new, and an expressman actually brings it into your house, and you have really cut the cord, and have the book in your hand, why, you

know," madam, that it seems wicked to send it back again."

Anything good to read and anything new! And this was what this man said who had all those fascinating piles of French and German books at his side, which to Irene's eye had seemed piled up like the gateway of the Happy Land.

"At the least we can try," said Irene, while she thought what I have written in these seven lines. And at first she thought she would send Jeannie back to 99 "Needy" Street; but then she remembered that the joy of inviting and sending would be, in itself, so much comfort to the poor sick man; and so she only gave him the address of Feodor Ivanovitch at Mrs. McGoffin's, 99 Oneida Street. He took it really cheerily, and read it with a smile, to say, "Feodor Ivanovitch: that is like a novel already. Did you ever read 'Ivan Ivanovitch'? No, of course you are too young."

Irene did not say that she had read Homer and the Book of Job, but bade good-bye now, and took Jeannie away.

How bright Beacon Street seemed to her, and how she and Jeannie beamed upon the babies in the carriages! She asked Jeannie if she ever saw in Aberdeen a perambulator that folded up. And Jeannie had seen one, and explained it to her. And Irene met ever so many of her friends. And one tall girl whom she hardly knew stopped her and asked some question; and Irene wondered

why she stopped her to ask her something of no consequence at all. I can tell you why the girl stopped her: she wanted to see just that look of peace and of joy and energy all fused together. She wanted to go up the hill baptized again and made alive in that holy spirit; and she did go up so. And Irene went down the hill chattering with Jeannie, but wondering why the tall girl stopped her.

"Is Mrs. Herbert in?"

No; Mrs. Herbert was not in. This was Irene's first disappointment of that day. She had just time to think that; for she had really wanted to see the tender, foreign face, broad at the temples, you know, and with a low forehead, — not looking in the very least like Pallas Minerva. She had wanted to see this again; but if it was not to be so, why, it was not. So she simply left the pink parcel with a doubting servant-girl, who, even at Christmas, distrusted Greeks who did not come in carriages, even if they brought gifts and left them. Even in pink paper the servant-girl thought that this was a preparation to clean silver, and would be called for again. So she doubted about taking it; but Irene, who understood all this without a word, left it none the less, and charged her to give it to Mrs. Herbert the moment she came in.

"Who shall I say called?" asked the girl, at last determining that this was not a powder in disguise.

"No matter who. — Come, Jeannie," to the Scotch girl, who was wondering before a print in the hall of John Knox abusing Queen Mary; and they stepped out again, to meet poor Mrs. Herbert, pale and wearied, but still so tender and so little like Pallas Minerva, stepping down from her own carriage.

Irene crossed the sidewalk. "It is Mrs. Herbert, I believe. I have just left at your house a little parcel which I saw in your hand in the street-car. You dropped it," she said hurriedly, when she saw Mrs. Herbert growing so pale and almost gasping as she turned round to her, "and after you had gone I found it."

"I believe you are an angel," said the other. "No, do not go away; just come in for one moment. Let me tell you how frightened I was, and what a loss it would have been." And she thundered again at that bell, as if any thunder would have started from her dime-novel before her time the girl whose business it was to attend it, and who simply said, when she heard it first, "Imperdent critters! let 'em ring!"

At last, however, the last chapter of the novel was done, and the girl let her mistress and Irene in, both of them almost crying with excitement now, and Jeannie wondering, but forgotten, behind.

"Why, you see," said the intense, overstrung lady, "you see, my dear child, my brother sails on Monday. And when those people in the rail-

way-office said just now it would be two or three days, perhaps, before the conductor brought it in — besides, I did not think I had it in the car: I remembered laying it down on the table where we had the meeting. But here it is, — do let me show her to you. My dear, dear mother! You see" — this as she pulled at the refractory string, — "you see, the setting is all gold, and I knew if I lost it in the street, — why, my own dear child, I might never have seen it again."

The string was off, and she showed to Irene a miniature picture, — beautiful, very beautiful.

Irene looked at it long without speaking. Then she said, "It would be hard never to see that face again."

"And yet, — do you know," said Mrs. Herbert, "it is not half beautiful enough. This is just rest, you know, — yes, happy rest, satisfied rest. Oh! I have seen her look so a thousand times. But when she talked to people, — talked to us children, you know, — kept the whole town alive, — why, her face nearly blazed with light. Of course you could not put that in a picture."

Then she made Irene sit down, and, perhaps with something of her mother's magnetism, held her there, as she talked of her mother; of this brother who was to sail the next week, of what they had been to each other, and how she should miss him; just as if Irene were not a stranger. Ah, me! was she ever a stranger to anybody?

"But, my dear child, you look pale. Come right here, — come into the dining-room. My lunch is all ready too. Sit right down here. Let me send for a glass of wine. I did not see that you were tired. I hope you are not as faint as I am, now this is all over."

And so she made Irene stay and lunch with her. She did not remember Jeannie, but Irene did. And Irene knew how happy Jeannie was, cruising round in that front reception-room where she had been left, and inventing for herself stories from the hundred pictures on the walls. Nay, Irene even amused herself by the contrast between Jeannie's life and Mrs. Herbert's. She had called Jeannie from washing up her "dinner-things" an hour ago; and here was Mrs. Herbert refreshing herself, that she might await her dinner five hours hence. As for Irene, she was hungry, and was faint, and was glad that Mrs. Herbert asked her to lunch. If it had not been for the pink-paper parcel, she would have stopped at the B. Y. M. C. U. coffee-room, and have eaten what Bridget used to call a "bully of beef," and Mr. Woodbury would have punched out the worth of it from her ticket.

And so these two women sat, and Mrs. Herbert poured out the whole story of her agony when she had discovered her loss; how she came to have the picture with her, — she told that; why she had it in her hand as the safest way to carry it, — she told that. Some sexes will understand

this last without explanation: to other sexes the safety of this method of preserving small valuables will be a marvel forever. And when once more she had thanked Irene for coming, she said, so pleasantly, —

"I saw you too. I was wondering about you, and making a romance about you, all the time. Who your Tartar friend was, I wondered; and I heard the funny boy jabber German to him. It was mean, but I could not help listening. It sounded so like dear Blankenheim."

"Why!" said Irene, interrupting. "He showed me a letter from Blankenheim only this very morning."

"Did he? why, where is he? who is he? I must see him. Can you send him here, my dear Miss — Why, what is your name? I felt as if I had known you always, and now I do not know what your name is."

Irene laughed and told, and the impetuous lady rushed on. She had none of the shyness of Mrs. Donne — not a bit of it!

"Why, I spent five — six — years of the best years of my girlhood in Blankenheim. Look here, and here, and here; these are pictures Horace made there. And here, — is not this pretty? There, I lived in that room, — see, — that window just above the poplar is my window."

And so they fell back to talk about Rudolf and the Russian; and Irene told of the coincidence

about the Russian books and the pale gentleman at Mrs. Donne's.

"Did he rouse up so? Poor, dear fellow! that is the best I have heard to-day. There he lies, you know, all worn out. It would be wicked to say *blasé*, — for he is not one whit *blasé*, — but it seems so. That beautiful house, you know, and that lovely wife, and those books, and all he knows, you know, — for he knows everything, — and yet every day so dark to him, and the outlook so gloomy."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"Matter? what is the matter with any of us? Living forty times too fast. Just as bad for good people to do so as for bad people; just as bad for learned people like him, as for fools like me. 'Nervous exhaustion,' they call it, — 'nervous depression.' Used up ten years of life in five, I say. And he did it just as much, you know, — in all his mines, and smelting-works, and machines, and presiding at the hospital, and building the Athenæum, and arranging about the Convalescent Home, — just as much as if he had been the worst *roué* of them all. And then, that angel of a wife of his just sits by, and sends for doctors, and nurses him. And he thinks he shall die in a poorhouse, and won't so much as buy himself a shoestring, and is all used up and wretched. Now you have given him one cheerful hour. Miss Mayhew, it is the best present that has been made to-day."

Then she fell to asking more about the Russian; and why Irene had said that Mr. Donne would do better with him in Swedish than in German. "He does not know much Swedish," said she, "though they did spend some time in Stockholm. I mean to send Ingeborg in there. You must see Ingeborg; she is so pretty." And then she rang, and made a message for Ingeborg to come in, — and asked Ingeborg about the sewing. Ingeborg was a Swedish girl, who was the seamstress. She stood a minute and made pretty answers in German, and then went away.

"The sweetest creature in the world," said her mistress; "reads everything I read, and much more. I made her read me 'The Children of the Lord's Supper' in the Swedish, just that I might hear the pretty words." And she repeated in the Swedish the closing lines.

So half an hour sped very pleasantly. And when Irene called Jeannie from her dream of romance, and they walked across the Public Garden together, and Jeannie thanked her for taking her with her, and told her it was the best Christmas present she ever had, — why, it occurred to Irene, all at once, that in starting to give the rest of the world a Christmas present, she had given one to herself as well.

Should she go down to No. 99 Needy Street, to see that there was no botch there? No, she would not go. They were not fools: they would take care of themselves. She would go home in

the lovely winter afternoon and write a letter to somebody to tell the adventures of the day.

Not that they seemed to her specially varied; all life was varied for her, and very full: but she did think that they ranged rather wider in their interest than was usual even in her adventures.

So, before she was tired, she was at her pretty davenport in her pretty room, looking out over the Valley Beautiful upon the Delectable Mountains, as the sun was setting cheerily on them and lighting them up with the glories of amber and gold and fire.

CHAPTER III

ANOTHER YEAR

How quickly a year goes round!

And this year the snow had fallen as early as Thanksgiving. And on Adam and Eve's Day, in the morning, a little fresh fall had made every roadway look as if it were ready for a wedding. But the sky had cleared, and it was, oh, so blue! And Irene came out and stood on the top of the high steps, and looked across the Valley Beautiful to the Delectable Mountains.

She was in a sealskin sack this time, and she wore a pretty Polish cap, all ready for a sleigh-ride; and as, with her deep brown eyes, she looked into the blue, you would have known that she was looking into heaven.

Just a minute she stood there, and then drove up a heavily robed sleigh; and Horace Whittier, who drove the handsome horses, flung down the reins, sure that they would stand, and ran up the steps and caught her by both hands.

"I am ten minutes early!" cried he, "but you are earlier. Victory, Victory! She waits on the steps for her impatient lover."

"Impudent boy!" said Irene, as he almost lifted her into the sleigh, "is there nothing in the world but you and your old horses? Would not anybody with half a quarter of an eye want to stand and see that snow on the evergreens and my dear old Blue Hills white against the sky? And you suppose I was waiting for you?"

"Anyway," said he happily, as he tucked her in, "it is lucky I came early."

"I think you are apt to come early," said she, and they laughed happily as they started.

"Dear child," said Horace, "these bear-skins are the most false of shams. This thing we sit in is nothing but an express-wagon. I made just room enough for your little feet; lucky they are so little. But for me, what with Noah's-arks, and tin horses, and the Dutchman and his wife, and battledores, — I am sure I put my heel through the battledores, — and the thermometer that I sat upon, and my poor sister's glass shade, which I am afraid I drove the whip-stock through, — for me, I should be very uncomfortable if you were not here. You do not think all these people

would mind if I just melted the rime on my moustache by resting it for an instant on that velvet cheek of yours, do you?"

"Horace, if you do not talk sense, I will beckon to that conductor and go for my errands in the Paul Dudley. People ride in the Paul Dudley without having idiots talk to them."

"Sweetheart, the Paul Dudley shall be hung this day with camellias and orange-blossoms. It was in the Paul Dudley that you found the picture. If it had not been for the Paul Dudley and the picture, where should I have been this day?" and now he was very serious.

"Dear Horace," said she, "it was to be, and forty Paul Dudleys could not help it. Some things are written in heaven." So they talked, now of the gravest and now of the gayest; laughed sometimes, and all but cried sometimes as he told some story of his adventurous life, or she some story of hers, so quiet; but he said that hers was more adventurous than his. They talked, they laughed, or they were even silent, in all the joy and certainty of happy love.

"How splendid your bearskin cap is!" said she; "if it were only after dark when we came to Oneida Street, we might ask the policeman to show us the road to the roof of the houses, and you could go down the chimney with the Noah's-arks and things, while I held the pawing steeds on the ridge-pole. On the whole, I am rather glad that the methods of civilization don't require

us to ride on ridge-poles. I am sure I should be frightened. You must n't stay too long, and I don't think I will get out. Just at noon we must be at the wedding, and there 's the hospital and Jeannie's people beside."

"Never fear me about being late at weddings," said the impetuous Horace: "sometimes I think I can never wait till they come. But the longest lane turns at last."

"I tell you," said she, "that you are such a favorite with Mrs. McGoffin that you will stand whispering soft nothings in her ear while I am freezing to death here; and at last I shall take mercy on the horses, and walk them ten or twenty times up the street and down, and they will take fright in Harrison Avenue and run five miles, and I shall lie over the back of the seat screaming, 'Horace, Horace!' and you will have no clew to follow by but a line of Noah's-arks and thermometers on the road; and a mounted policeman will come to the rescue, and will take me to a grausome church near Punkapog and insist that I shall be his wife."

"Irene, I will kill that policeman! I shall arrive on my bicycle just in time; and when the minister says, 'Does any man know cause?' I shall say, 'I do.' I shall shoot him with his own revolver; I shall take his place, and for once a wedding will take place earlier than it was expected. Never you fear Mrs. McGoffin's fascinations. I shall be down in twenty seconds, before the horses know that I have stopped."

Nor did he much exaggerate his own speed. He left the Noah's-arks and horses and guns and swords and cups and balls, and the prayer-book and the tippet, for Mrs. McGoffin, Dennis McGoffin, and all the little McGoffins, and was down, as he said himself, "in no time." Then to Jeannie's friends, with the self-registering thermometer and the Scott's poems for the old people, and no end of parcels for the youngsters. Here, too, he left Irene's Christmas wishes and told why Irene could not stay long that day.

At the hospital they both alighted together. Of course the children of a year ago were gone. But life is almost as finite at one Christmas-tide as at another: so there was no lack, alas! of broken arms and broken legs and burned hands among the little ones. This year there were no paper soldiers for them; but, by the time they said "good-by," each child had on his bed-table a box of pewter soldiers; Prussian for the German girl, French for the French boy, red-coats for little Johnny Bull, and even Highlanders for the little Sawney. These, and two or three books for the bigger children, left the surgical ward happy.

"Thirteen minutes for the Weis children!" cried he, "and then there will be not a magnet nor a Noah's-ark in the shebang." Nor was there.

Then, as on the wings of the wind, he cut across to the little Swedish Emanuel church; and here was Tom, waiting for the horses. And,

quite in time, Horace gravely led Irene up the right-hand aisle, and a very famous usher, with an enormous bridal favor, placed him and her in a pew among the bridegroom's friends.

"I told him to put us here," whispered he, "because I was so afraid the bride would have more on her side than poor Feodor. She is so pretty, you know."

"You must not talk in meeting. You must sit perfectly still."

Nor did he have to wait long before the bride's procession moved up one aisle; and the pretty Ingeborg, blushing under her orange-blossoms and her lace veil, met, face to face, the handsome, proud, olive-faced Feodor, who appeared, with his best man, at the head of his aisle; and then, in that quaint, homely Swedish, and by that pretty form of service, dear, good Mr. Johanssen made them one.

Then, as is the sensible custom of the olden churches, all the friends met for a moment to sign the register. So in the vestry, while it was got ready, Mr. Donne and his wife, Mrs. Herbert, Horace and Irene, as well as Mrs. McGoffin and Dennis, and Jeannie and her father and mother, — all stood together, making, indeed, near half of the witnesses.

"Thank you so for the Patriarch's Sermons," said Irene to Mr. Donne. "As soon as we are well on our journey, I shall make Horace read them aloud to me."

And Mr. Donne seemed like a different man from that poor, languid fellow we saw a year before, as he said eagerly: —

"You will find the poems at your house. Roberts has sent the first volume from the binder's for a wedding present."

"I believe, Mr. Donne, you claim the making of this match," said Horace, as he approached them: "now I thought it was my blunder."

"Yours? how yours?"

"Why, because she was my sister's best bower, don't you see?"

"Your sister's fiddlestick! The Tartar, there, looks to me as if he thought he made it. For my part, I give Miss Mayhew the credit."

Meanwhile Mrs. Donne was hovering round Irene, and asking about the evening, and talking about her husband, and making her remember how ill he was, and making her wonder how well he seemed now.

"I believe, Irene, the day you came in and set him to work on other people, — that day dates his recovery."

"He has sent me the volume of Philarete's sermons; and I shall make Horace read them to me."

"You will find that easy enough. They are just such sermons as men like. They are the Patriarch's annual reviews of the social condition of Russia, you know. They are not a bit like what we call sermons."

"And the poems?"

"Oh! the drollest, weirdest, most enticing and most provoking things you ever saw. But, Irene, have you seen Rudolf? You will not know him in his ulster. He is at the door with the horses. Do you know Edward says that boy is a genius? But you found that out too."

Irene, in another minute, was kissing Ingeborg. Then she gave her hand to Feodor.

"It was a happy day, I assure you, for me, Miss Mayhew," said he, in that preternaturally accurate English which Russians speak when they speak any, "the day I met you in the hospital" — "And the day when my little Rudolf piloted you to Mr. Donne" — "And the day when Ingeborg came in to help out his Swedish," said the proud bridegroom.

And here came Mr. Johanssen and his clerk, with the big book of the register.

And after they had all signed, the minister bade the bride and bridegroom good-by with a sort of benediction; and then with much hand-clapping, and gratulations in many languages, Mr. and Mrs. Ivanovitch withdrew, and he lifted her to the waiting carriage.

"Irene," said the impetuous Mrs. Herbert, as they looked from the window, "I want you to notice that faultless polonaise of hers. Now, you think Madame Pierrot made it — and well you may. But she did not. It is Ingeborg's own idea, to tell the truth; but every piece was

cut, and every stitch taken, by your Jeannie Fraser. The girl is an artist."

"And so you will find her, Fanny. She will not run your Wheeler and Wilson long. Before you are five years older, she will be in your billiard-room, using the upper light as she models her group of —"

"Come, Irene, — come, Irene, — you and Fanny must not philosophize forever. The lady Irene's shebang stops the way, and Tom is dying to get out of it; I, to get in. Good-by, good people, good-by." And so wedding number one ended.

CHAPTER LAST

TWO BY TWO

THE Church of Glad Tidings was dimly lighted that same evening. In festoons on the pulpit and the font, in lines marking the shape of the cross behind the pulpit, there was enough evergreen to show that this was Christmas-time. On the communion-table itself was a heap of beautiful flowers, which even covered the low vase whose waters kept them fresh. The font was overflowing, too, with white flowers; and so one knew that here were preparations for a festival. From the organ came heavenly, sympathizing, and peaceful harmonies. And in the front pews perhaps a hundred people waited quietly, — among

them everybody we met at Ingeborg's wedding, except Mr. Johanssen and his clerk, and two others. "And many more were there," of whom it has not been necessary to advise this reader. The minister sat in his great high-backed chair, holding his book in his hand.

Quietly, and without any one's knowing the moment of their entrance except the minister, Horace and Irene came into the church together, and walked slowly up to the chancel. The church flashed light for their welcome. The minister stood up to greet them, and as the strains of the organ died away, began the service: "We are gathered together —"

And as he looked upon her face, as their eyes met, it was as the face of an angel: love, courage, truth, and peace. And then he could look into Horace's face, and there was the happy, strong look of a brave man: joy, courage, certainty, peace.

I suppose Irene's dress, which was a present from Mrs. Herbert, was like other people's wedding-dresses. I sat rather back in the church; but I am sure it was not a claret-colored alpaca. Indeed, I know, from some notes before me — why should I conceal it from you, dear Fanchon and dear Dick? — I know that it was of a creamy-white brocade. You thought the veil was of Valenciennes; yes; but in truth it was made on cushions in Dunrobin Alley by Rudolf Weis's own mother, who had been taught all that art in Belgium before she was sixteen years old. That

was her present to the bride. And the myrtle wreath the bride wore, with its lovely blossoms, was from myrtle, every spray of which Rudolf himself had grown in his own windows.

And this bouquet, which even Horace let her carry instead of an orthodox bouquet of orange-blossoms, — you see how pretty it is, though it is not all white, — it is made, every leaf of it, from the flowers the hospital-children have been nursing in their own windows. The Maltese cross she wears is Edward Donne's present; and the bouquet-holder — all that curious open silver filagree-work — is the work of Feodor's own hands. There is Feodor, and there is Ingeborg with him, in the third pew on the bridegroom's side.

There is not a person in the church, from the old minister forward, but would gladly die for Irene, though they would all rather live for her. There is not a person here but is perfectly happy, because she is perfectly happy, or they hope she will be. Perfectly happy she is, or she thinks she is. Perfectly happy is he, or he thinks he is. But how little he knows or she knows yet what a life of perfect happiness is! How much better will they know even twelve months from to-day!

So the minister blessed them with all his heart. And the organ waked from its silence, and sounded forth the wedding-march; and Horace led her in triumph from the church, and we all followed.

"Two by two: that is the rule."

STAND AND WAIT

STAND AND WAIT

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS

I

CHRISTMAS EVE

"THEY 'VE come! they 've come!"

This was the cry of little Herbert, as he ran in from the square stone which made the large doorstep of the house. Here he had been watching, a self-posted sentinel, for the moment when the carriage should turn the corner at the bottom of the hill.

"They 've come! they 've come!" echoed joyfully through the house; and the cry penetrated out into the extension, or ell, in which the grown members of the family were, in the kitchen, "getting tea" by some formulas more solemn than ordinary.

"Have they come?" cried Grace; and she set her skillet back to the quarter-deck, or after-part of the stove, lest its white contents should burn while she was away. She threw a waiting handkerchief over her shoulders and ran with the others to the front door to wave something white, and to be in at the first welcome.

Young and old were gathered there in that hospitable open space where the side road swept up to the barn on its way from the main road. The bigger boys of the home party had scattered half-way down the hill by this time. Even grandmamma had stepped down from the stone and walked half way to the roadway. Every one was waving something. Those who had no handkerchiefs had hats or towels to wave; and the more advanced boys began an undefined or irregular cheer.

But the carryall advanced slowly up the hill with no answering handkerchief and no bonneted head stretched out from the side. And as it neared Sam and Andrew, their enthusiasm could be seen to droop, and George and Herbert stopped their cheers as it came up to them; and before it was near the house, on its grieved way up the hill, the bad news had come up before it, as bad news will, — "She has not come, after all."

It was Huldah Root, Grace's older sister, who had not come. John Root, their father, had himself driven down to the station to meet her; and Abner, her oldest brother, had gone with him. It was two years since she had been at home, and the whole family was on tiptoe to welcome her. Hence the unusual tea preparation; hence the sentinel on the doorstep; hence the general assembly in the yard; and, after all, she had not come! It was a wretched disappointment. Her mother had that heavy, silent look, which children take as the heaviest affliction of

all when they see it in their mothers' faces. John Root himself led the horse into the barn as if he did not care now for anything which might happen in heaven above or in earth beneath. The boys were voluble in their rage: — "It is too bad!" and, "Grandmamma, don't you think it is too bad?" and, "It is the meanest thing I ever heard of in all my life!" and, "Grace, why don't you say anything? did you ever know anything so mean?" As for poor Grace herself, she was quite beyond saying anything. All the treasured words she had laid up to say to Huldah; all the doubts and hopes and guesses, which were secret to all but God, but which were to be poured out in Huldah's ear as soon as they were alone, were coming up one by one, as if to choke her. She had waited so long for this blessed fortnight of sympathy, and now she had lost it. Grace could say nothing. And poor grandmamma, on whom fell the stilling of the boys, was at heart as wretched as any of them.

Somehow, something got itself put on the supper-table; and when John Root and Abner came in from the barn, they all sat down to pretend to eat something. What a miserable contrast to the Christmas eve party which had been expected!

The observance of Christmas is quite a novelty in the heart of New England among the lords of the manor. Winslow and Brewster, above Plymouth Rock, celebrated their first Christmas by

making all hands work all day in the raising of their first house. It was in that way that a Christian empire was begun. They builded better than they knew. They and theirs, in that hard day's work, struck the key-note for New England for two centuries and a half. And many and many a New-Englander, still in middle life, remembers that in childhood, though nurtured in Christian homes, he could not have told, if he were asked, on what day of the year Christmas fell. But as New England, in the advance of the world, has come into the general life of the world, she has shown no inaptitude for the greater enjoyments of life; and with the true catholicity of her great Congregational system, her people and her churches seize, one after another, all the noble traditions of the loftiest memories. And so in this matter we have in hand; it happened that the Roots, in their hill-side home, had determined that they would celebrate Christmas, as never had Roots done before since Josiah Root landed at Salem, from the "Hercules," with other Kentish people, in 1635. Abner and Gershom had cut and trimmed a pretty fir-balsam from the edge of the Hotchkiss clearing; and it was now in the best parlor. Grace, with Mary Bickford, her firm ally and other self, had gilded nuts, and rubbed lady apples, and strung popped corn; and the tree had been dressed in secret, the youngsters all locked and warned out from the room. The choicest turkeys of the

drove, and the tenderest geese from the herd, and the plumpest fowls from the barnyard, had been sacrificed on consecrated altars. And all this was but as accompaniment and side illustration of the great glory of the celebration, which was, that Huldah, after her two years' absence, — Huldah was to come home.

And now she had not come, — nay, was not coming!

As they sat down at their Barmecide feast, how wretched the assemblage of unrivalled dainties seemed! John Root handed to his wife their daughter's letter; she read it and gave it to Grace, who read it and gave it to her grandmother. No one read it aloud. To read aloud in such trials is not the custom of New England.

Boston, Dec. 24, 1848.

Dear Father and Mother, — It is dreadful to disappoint you all, — but I cannot come. I am all ready, and this goes by the carriage that was to take me to the cars. But our dear little Horace has just been brought home, I am afraid, dying; but we cannot tell, and I cannot leave him. You know there is really no one who can do what I can. He was riding on his pony. First the pony came home alone: and, in five minutes after, two policemen brought the dear child in a carriage. His poor mother is very calm, but cannot think yet, or do anything. We have sent for his father, who is down town. I try to hope that he may come to himself; but he only lies and draws long breaths on his little bed. The doctors are with him now; and

I write this little scrawl to say how dreadfully sorry I am. A merry Christmas to you all. Do not be troubled about me. Your own loving HULDAH.

P.S. I have got some little presents for the children; but they are all in my trunk, and I cannot get them out now. I will make a bundle Monday. Good-bye. The man is waiting.

This was the letter that was passed from hand to hand, of which the contents slowly trickled into the comprehension of all parties, according as their several ages permitted them to comprehend. Sam, as usual, broke the silence by saying, —

"It is a perfect shame! She might as well be a nigger slave! I suppose they think they have bought her and sold her. I should like to see 'em all, just for once, and tell 'em that her flesh and blood is as good as theirs; and that, with all their airs and their money, they've no business to —"

"Sam," said poor Grace, "you shall not say such things. Huldah has staid because she chose to stay; and that is the worst of it. She will not think of herself, not for one minute; and so — everything happens."

And Grace was sobbing beyond speech again; and her intervention amounted, therefore, to little or nothing. The boys, through the evening, descanted among themselves on the outrage. Grandmamma, and, at last, their mother, took

successive turns in taming their indignation; but, for all this, it was a miserable evening. As for John Root, he took a lamp in one hand and *The Weekly Tribune* in the other, and sat before the fire and pretended to read; but not once did John Root change the fold of the paper that evening. It was a wretched Christmas Eve; and at half-past eight, every light was out and every member of the household was lying, stark awake, in bed.

Huldah Root, you see, was a servant with the Bartletts, in Boston. When she was only sixteen, she was engaged at her "trade," as a vest-maker, in that town; and, by some chance, made an appointment to sew as a seamstress at Mrs. Bartlett's for a fortnight. There were any number of children to be clothed there; and the fortnight extended to a month. Then the month became two months. She grew fond of Mrs. Bartlett, because Mrs. Bartlett grew fond of her. The children adored her; and she kept an eye to them; and it ended in her engaging to spend the winter there, half-seamstress, half-nurse, half-nursery-governess, and a little of everything. From such a beginning, it had happened that she had lived there six years, in confidential service. She could cook better than anybody in the house, — better than Mrs. Bartlett herself; but it was not often that she tried her talent there. On a birthday, perhaps, in August, she would make huckleberry cakes, by the old homestead "re-

ceipt," for the children. She had the run of all their clothes as nobody else did; took the younger ones to be measured; and saw that none of the older ones went out with a crack in a seam, or a rough edge at the foot of a trouser. It was whispered that Minnie had rather go into the sewing-room to get Huldah to "show her" about "alligation" or "square-root," than to wait for Miss Thurber's explanations in the morning. In fifty such ways it happened that Huldah, — who, on the roll-call of the census-man, probably rated as a nursery-maid in the house, — was the confidential friend of every member of the family, from Mr. Bartlett, who knew who knew where "The Intelligencer" was, down to the chore-boy who came in to black the shoes. And so it was, that, when poor little Horace was brought in with his skull knocked in by the pony, Huldah was — and modestly knew that she was — the most essential person in the stunned family circle.

While her brothers and sisters were putting out their lights at New Durham, heart-sick and wounded, Huldah was sitting in that still room, where only the rough, broken breathing of poor Horace broke the sound. She was changing, once in ten minutes, the ice-water cloths; was feeling of his feet sometimes; wetting his tongue once or twice in an hour; putting her finger to his pulse with a native sense, which needed no second-hand to help it; and all the time, with the thought of him, was remembering how grieved

and hurt and heartbroken they were at home. Every half-hour or less, a pale face appeared at the door; and Huldah just slid across the room and said, "He is really doing nicely, pray lie down;" or "His pulse is surely better. I will certainly come to you if it flags;" or "Pray trust me, — I will not let you wait a moment, if he needs you;" or "Pray get ready for to-morrow. An hour's sleep now will be worth everything to you then." And the poor mother would crawl back to her baby and her bed, and pretend to try to sleep; and in half an hour would appear again at the door. One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock. How companionable Dr. Lowell's clock seems when one is sitting up so with no one else to talk to! Four o'clock at last; it is really growing to be quite intimate. Five o'clock. "If I were in dear Durham now, one of the roosters would be calling." — Six o'clock. — Poor Horace stirs, turns, flings his arm over. "Mother — O Huldah! is it you? How nice that is!" And he is unconscious again; but he had had sense enough to know her. What a blessed Christmas present that is, to tell that to his poor mother when she slides in at daybreak and says, "You shall go to bed now, dear child. You see I am very fresh; and you must rest yourself, you know. Do you really say he knew you? Are you sure he knew you? Why, Huldah, what an angel of peace you are!"

So opened Huldah's Christmas morning.

Days of doubt, nights of watching. Every now and then the boy knows his mother, his father, or Huldah. Then will come this heavy stupor which is so different from sleep. At last the surgeons have determined that a piece of the bone must come away. There is the quiet gathering of the most skilful at the determined hour; there is the firm table for the little fellow to lie on; here is the ether and the sponge; and, of course, here and there, and everywhere, is Huldah. She can hold the sponge, or she can fetch and carry; she can answer at once if she is spoken to; she can wait, if it is waiting; she can act, if it is acting. At last the wretched little button, which has been pressing on our poor boy's brain, is lifted safely out. It is in Morton's hand; he smiles and nods at Huldah as she looks inquiry, and she knows he is satisfied. And does not the poor child himself, even in his unconscious sleep, draw his breath more lightly than he did before? All is well.

"Who do you say that young woman is?" says Dr. Morton to Mr. Bartlett, as he draws on his coat in the doorway after all is over. Could we not tempt her over to the General Hospital?"

"No, I think not. I do not think we can spare her."

The boy Horace is new born that day; a New Year's gift to his mother. So pass Huldah's holidays.

II

CHRISTMAS AGAIN

FOURTEEN years make of the boy whose pony has been too much for him, a man equal to any prank of any pony. Fourteen years will do this, even to boys of ten. Horace Bartlett is the colonel of a cavalry regiment, stationed just now in West Virginia; and, as it happens, this twenty-four-year-old boy has an older commission than anybody in that region, and is the Post Commander at Talbot C. H., and will be, most likely, for the winter. The boy has a vein of foresight in him; a good deal of system; and, what is worth while to have by the side of system, some knack of order. So soon as he finds that he is responsible, he begins to prepare for responsibility. His staff-officers are boys too; but they are all friends, and all mean to do their best. His Surgeon-in-Charge took his degree at Washington last spring; that is encouraging. Perhaps, if he has not much experience, he has, at least, the latest advices. His head is level too; he means to do his best, such as it is; and, indeed, all hands in that knot of boy counsellors will not fail for laziness or carelessness. Their very youth makes them provident and grave.

So among a hundred other letters, as October opens, Horace writes this: —

Talbot Court House, Va.,
Oct. 3, 1863.

Dear Huldah, — Here we are still, as I have been explaining to father; and, as you will see by my letter to him, here we are like to stay. Thus far we are doing sufficiently well. As I have told him, if my plans had been adopted we should have been pushed rapidly forward up the valley of the Yellow Creek; Badger's corps would have been withdrawn from before Winchester; Wilcox and Steele together would have threatened Early; and, then, by a rapid flank movement, we should have pounced down on Longstreet (not the great Longstreet, but little Longstreet), and compelled him to uncover Lynchburg; we could have blown up the dams and locks on the canal, made a freshet to sweep all the obstructions out of James River, and then, if they had shown half as much spirit on the Potomac, all of us would be in Richmond for our Christmas dinner. But my plans, as usual, were not asked for, far less taken. So, as I said, here we are.

Well, I have been talking with Lawrence Worster, my Surgeon-in-Charge, who is a very good fellow. His sick-list is not bad now, and he does not mean to have it bad; but he says that he is not pleased with the ways of his ward-masters; and it was his suggestion, not mine, mark you, that I should see if one or two of the Sanitary women would not come as far as this to make things decent. So, of course, I write to you. Don't you think mother could spare you to spend the winter here? It will be rough, of course; but it is all in the good cause. Perhaps you know some nice women, — well, not like you, of course; but still, disinterested and sensible, who

would come too. Think of this carefully, I beg you, and talk to father and mother. Worster says we may have three hundred boys in hospital before Christmas. If Jubal Early should come this way, I don't know how many more. Talk with mother and father.

Always yours, HORACE BARTLETT.

P. S. I have shown Worster what I have written; he encloses a sort of official letter which may be of use. He says, "Show this to Dr. Hayward; get them to examine you and the others, and then the government, on his order, will pass you on." I enclose this, because, if you come, it will save time.

Of course Huldah went. Grace Starr, her married sister, went with her, and Mrs. Philbrick, and Anna Thwart. That was the way they happened to be all together in the Methodist Church that had been, of Talbot Court House, as Christmas holidays drew near, of the year of grace, 1863.

She and her friends had been there quite long enough to be wonted to the strangeness of December in the open air. On her little table in front of the desk of the church were three or four buttercups in bloom, which she had gathered in an afternoon walk, with three or four heads of hawksweed. "The beginning of one year," Huldah said, "with the end of the other." Nay, there was even a stray rose which Dr. Sprigg had found in a farmer's garden. Huldah came out from the vestry, where her own bed was, in the

gray of the morning, changed the water for the poor little flowers, sat a moment at the table to look at last night's memoranda, and then beckoned to the ward-master, and asked him, in a whisper, what was the movement she had heard in the night, — "Another alarm from Early?"

"No, miss; not an alarm. I saw the Colonel's orderly as he passed. He stopped here for Dr. Fenno's case. There had come down an express from Gen. Mitchell, and the men were called without the bugle, each man separately; not a horse was to neigh, if they could help it. And really, miss, they were off in twenty minutes."

"Off, who are off?"

"The whole post, miss, except the relief for to-day. There are not fifty men in the village besides us here. The orderly thought they were to go down to Braxton's; but he did not know."

Here was news indeed! news so exciting that Huldah went back at once and called the other women; and then all of them together began on that wretched business of waiting. They had never yet known what it was to wait for a real battle. They had had their beds filled with this and that patient from one or another post, and had some gun-shot wounds of old standing among the rest; but this was their first battle, if it were a battle. So the covers were taken off that long line of beds down on the west aisle, and from those under the singers' seats; and the sheets and pillow-cases were brought out from the linen

room, and aired, and put on. Our biggest kettles are filled up with strong soup; and we have our milk-punch and our beef-tea all in readiness; and everybody we can command is on hand to help lift patients and distribute food. But there is only too much time. Will there never be any news? Anna Thwart and Doctor Sprigg have walked down to the bend of the hill to see if any messenger is coming. As for the other women, they sit at their table; they look at their watches; they walk down to the door; they come back to the table. I notice they have all put on fresh aprons, for the sake of doing something more in getting ready.

Here is Anna Thwart. "They are coming! they are coming! somebody is coming. A mounted man is crossing the flat, coming towards us; and the doctor told me to come back and tell." Five minutes more, ten minutes more, an eternity more, and then, rat-tat-tat, rat-tat-tat, the mounted man is here. "Wagons right behind. We bagged every man of them at Wyatt's. Got there before daylight. Col. White's men from the Yellows came up just at the same time, and we pitched in before they knew it, — three or four regiments, thirteen hundred men, and all their guns."

"And with no fighting?"

"Oh, yes! fighting of course. The colonel has got a train of wagons down here with the men that are hurt. That's why I am here. Here is

his note." Thus does the mounted man discharge his errand backward.

"DEAR DOCTOR, — We have had great success. We have surprised the whole post. The company across the brook tried hard to get away; and a good many of them, and of Sykes's men are hit; but I cannot find that we have lost more than seven men. I have nineteen wagons here of wounded men, — some hurt pretty badly.

"Ever yours, H."

So there must be more waiting. But now we know what we are waiting for; and the end will come in a finite world. Thank God, at half-past three, here they are! Tenderly, gently. "Hush, Sam! Hush, Cæsar! You talk too much." Gently, tenderly. Twenty-seven of the poor fellows, with everything the matter, from a burnt face to a heart stopping its beats for want of more blood.

"Huldah, come here! This is my old classmate, Barthew; sat next me at prayers four years. He is a major in their army, you see. His horse stumbled and pitched him against a stone wall; and he has not spoken since. Don't tell me he is dying; but do as well for him, Huldah," — and the handsome boy smiled, — "do as well for him as you did for me." So they carried Barthew, senseless as he was, tenderly into the church; and he became E, 27, on an iron bedstead. Not half our soup was wanted, nor our beef-tea, nor our punch. So much the better.

Then came day and night, week in and out, of army system, and womanly sensibility; that quiet, cheerful, *homish*, hospital life, in the quaint surroundings of the whitewashed church; the pointed arches of the windows and the faded moreen of the pulpit telling that it is a church, in a reminder not unpleasant. Two or three weeks of hopes and fears, failures and success, bring us to Christmas Eve.

It is the surgeon-in-chief who happens to give our particular Christmas dinner, — I mean the one that interests you and me. Huldah and the other ladies had accepted his invitation. Horace Bartlett and his staff, and some of the other officers, were guests; and the doctor had given his own permit that Major Barthew might walk up to his quarters with the ladies. Huldah and he were in advance, he leaning, with many apologies, on her arm. Dr. Sprigg and Anna Thwart were far behind. The two married ladies, as needing no escort, were in the middle. Major Barthew enjoyed the emancipation, was delighted with his companion, could not say enough to make her praise the glimpses of Virginia, even if it were West Virginia.

"What a party it is, to be sure!" said he. "The doctor might call on us for our stories, as one of Dickens's chiefs would do at a Christmas feast. Let 's see, we should have

THE SURGEON'S TALE;

THE GENERAL'S TALE;

for we may at least make believe that Hod's stars have come from Washington. Then he must call in that one-eyed servant of his; and we will have

THE ORDERLY'S TALE.

Your handsome friend from Wisconsin shall tell

THE GERMAN'S TALE.

I shall be encouraged to tell

THE PRISONER'S TALE.

And you —"

"And I?" said Huldah, laughing, because he paused.

"You shall tell

THE SAINT'S TALE."

Barthew spoke with real feeling, which he did not care to disguise. But Huldah was not there for sentiment; and without quivering in the least, nor making other acknowledgment, she laughed, as she knew she ought to do, and said, "Oh, no! that is quite too grand; the story must end with

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SPECIAL RELIEF'S TALE.

It is a little unromantic to the sound; but that 's what it is."

"I don't see," persisted the major, "if Superintendent of Special Relief means saint in Latin, why we should not say so."

"Because we are not talking Latin," said

Huldah. "Listen to me; and before we come to dinner, I will tell you a story pretty enough for Dickens, or any of them; and it is a story not fifteen minutes old.

"Have you noticed that black-whiskered fellow under the gallery by the north window? — Yes, the same. He is French, enlisted, I think, in New London. I came to him just now, managed to say *étrennes* and *Noël* to him, and a few other French words, and asked if there were nothing we could do to make him more at home. Oh, no! there was nothing; madame was too good, and everybody was too good, and so on. But I persisted. I wished I knew more about Christmas in France; and I staid by. 'No, madame, nothing; there is nothing; but, since you say it, — if there were two drops of red wine, — *du vin de mon pays, madame ;* but you could not, here in Virginia.' Could not I? Long arms has a superintendent of special relief. There was a box of claret, which was the first thing I saw in the store-room the day I took my keys. The doctor was only too glad the man had thought of it; and you should have seen the pleasure that red glass, as full as I could pile it, gave him. The tears were running down his cheeks. Anna, there, had another Frenchman; and she sent some to him: and my man is now humming a little song about the *vin rouge* of Bourgogne. Would not Mr. Dickens make a pretty story of that for you, — 'THE FRENCHMAN'S STORY'?"

Barthew longed to say that the great novelist would not make so pretty a story as she did. But this time he did not dare.

You are not going to hear the eight stories. Mr. Dickens was not there; nor, indeed, was I. But a jolly Christmas dinner they had; though they had not those eight stories. Quiet they were and very, very happy. It was a strange thing, — if one could have analyzed it, that they should have felt so much at home, and so much at ease with each other in that queer Virginian kitchen, where the doctor and his friends of his mess had arranged the feast; and a happy thing it was, that the recollections of so many other Christmas homes should come in, not sadly, but pleasantly, and should cheer, rather than shade the evening. They felt off soundings, all of them. There was, for the time, no responsibility. The strain was gone. The gentlemen were glad to be dining with ladies, I believe: the ladies, unconsciously, were probably glad to be dining with gentlemen. The officers were glad they were not on duty; and the prisoner, if glad of nothing else, was glad he was not in bed. But he was glad for many things beside. You see it was but a little post. They were far away; and they took things with the ease of a detached command.

"Shall we have any toasts?" said the doctor, when his nuts and raisins and apples at last appeared.

"Oh, no! no toasts, — nothing so stiff as that."

"Oh, yes! oh, yes!" said Grace; "I should like to know what it is to drink a toast. Something I have heard of all my life, and never saw."

"One toast, at least, then," said the doctor. "Colonel Bartlett, will you name the toast?"

"Only one toast?" said Horace; "that is a hard selection: we must vote on that."

"No, no!" said a dozen voices; and a dozen laughing assistants at the feast offered their advice.

"I might give 'The Country;' I might give 'The Cause;' I might give 'The President:' and everybody would drink," said Horace. "I might give 'Absent friends,' or 'Home, sweet home;' but then we should cry."

"Why do you not give 'The trepanned people'?" said Worster, laughing, "or 'The silver-headed gentleman'?"

"Why don't you give 'The Staff and the Line?'" "Why don't you give 'Here's Hoping'?" "Give 'Next Christmas.'" "Give 'The Medical Department; and may they often ask us to dine!'"

"Give 'Saints and Sinners,'" said Major Barthew after the first outcry was hushed.

"I shall give no such thing," said Horace. "We have had a lovely dinner; and we know we have; and the host, who is a good fellow, knows the first thanks are not to him. Those of us who ever had our heads knocked open, like the Major

and me, do know. Fill your glasses, gentlemen; I give you 'The Special Diet Kitchen.'"

He took them all by surprise. There was a general shout; and the ladies all rose and dropped mock courtesies.

"By Jove!" said Barthew to the Colonel, afterwards, "It was the best toast I ever drank in my life. Anyway, that little woman has saved my life. Do you say she did the same to you?"

III

CHRISTMAS AGAIN

So you think that when the war was over, Major Barthew, then Major-General, remembered Huldah all the same, and came on and persuaded her to marry him, and that she is now sitting in her veranda, looking down on the Pamunkey River. You think that, do not you?

Well! you were never so mistaken in your life. If you want that story, you can go and buy yourself a dime novel. I would buy "The Rescued Rebel;" or, "The Noble Nurse," if I were you.

After the war was over, Huldah did make Col. Barthew and his wife a visit once, at their plantation in Pocataligo County; but I was not there; and know nothing about it.

Here is a Christmas of hers, about which she wrote a letter; and, as it happens, it was a letter to Mrs. Barthew.

HULDAH ROOT TO AGNES BARTHEW

VILLERS-BOCAGE, Dec. 27, 1868.

. . . Here I was, then, after this series of hopeless blunders, sole alone at the *gare* [French for station] of this little out-of-the-way town. My dear, there was never an American here since Christopher Columbus slept here when he was a boy. And here, you see, I was likely to remain; for there was no possibility of the others getting back to me till to-morrow, and no good in my trying to overtake them. All I could do was just to bear it, and live on, and live through, from Thursday to Monday; and really, what was worst of all was, that Friday was Christmas Day.

Well, I found a funny little carriage, with a funny old man who did not understand my *patois* any better than I did his; but he understood a franc-piece. I had my guide-book, and I said *auberge;* and we came to the oddest, most outlandish, and old-fashioned establishment that ever escaped from one of Julia Nathalie woman's novels. And here I am.

And the reason, my dear Mrs. Barthew, that I take to-day to write to you, you and the Colonel will now understand. You see it was only ten o'clock when I got here; then I went to walk, many *enfans terribles* following respectfully; then I came home and ate the funny refection; then I got a nap; then I went to walk again, and made a little sketch in the churchyard: and this time, one of the children brought up her mother, a funny Norman woman, in a delicious costume, — I have a sketch of another just like her, — and she dropped a courtesy, and in a very mild *patois* said she hoped the

children did not trouble madame. And I said, "Oh, no!" and found a sugar-plum for the child, and showed my sketch to the woman; and she said she supposed madame was Anglaise.

I said I was not Anglaise — and here the story begins; for I said I was *Américaine*. And, do you know, her face lighted up as if I had said I was St. Gulda, or St. Hilda, or any of their Northmen Saints.

"*Américaine! est-il possible? Jeannette, Gertrude, faites vos révérences, madame est Américaine.*"

And, sure enough, they all dropped preternatural courtesies. And then the most eager enthusiasm; how fond they all were of *les Américaines*, but how no *Américaines* had ever come before! And was madame at the Three Cygnets? And might she and her son and her husband call to see madame at the Three Cygnets? And might she bring a little *étrenne* to madame? And I know not what beside.

I was very glad the national reputation had gone so far. I really wished I were Charles Sumner (pardon me, dear Mrs. Barthew), that I might properly receive the delegation. But I said, "Oh, certainly!" and, as it grew dark, with my admiring *cortège* whispering now to the street full of admirers that madame was *Américaine*, I returned to the Three Cygnets.

And in the evening they all came. Really, you should see the pretty basket they brought for an *étrenne*. I could not guess then where they got such exquisite flowers; these lovely stephanotis blossoms, a perfect wealth of roses, and all arranged with charming taste in a quaint country basket, such as exists nowhere but in this particular section of this quaint old Normandy.

In came the husband, dressed up, and frightened, but thoroughly good in his look. In came my friend; and then two sons and two wives, and three or four children: and, my dear Mrs. Barthew, one of the sons, I knew him in an instant, was a man we had at Talbot Court House when your husband was there. I think the Colonel will remember him, — a black-whiskered man, who used to sing a little song about *le vin rouge* of Bourgogne.

He did not remember me; that I saw in a moment. It was all so different, you know. In the hospital, I had on my cap and apron, and here, — well, it was another thing. My hostess knew that they were coming, and had me in her largest room, and I succeeded in making them all sit down; and I received my formal welcome; and I thanked in my most Parisian French; and then the conversation hung fire. But I took my turn now, and turned round to poor Louis.

"You served in America, did you not?" said I.

"Ah, yes, madame! I did not know my mother had told you."

No more did she, indeed; and she looked astonished. But I persevered, —

"You seem strong and well."

"Ah, yes, madame!"

"How long since you returned?"

"As soon as there was peace, madame. We were mustered out in June, madame."

"And does your arm never trouble you?"

"Oh, never, madame! I did not know my mother had told you."

New astonishment on the part of the mother.

"You never had another piece of bone come out!"

"Oh, no, madame! how did madame know? I did not know my mother had told you!"

And by this time I could not help saying, "You Normans care more for Christmas than we Americans; is it not so, my brave?"

And this he would not stand; and he said stoutly, "Ah, no, madame! no, no, *jamais!*" and began an eager defence of the religious enthusiasm of the Americans, and their goodness to all people who were good, if people would only be good. But still he had not the least dream who I was. And I said, —

"Do the Normans ever drink Burgundy?" and to my old hostess, "Madame, could you bring us a flask *du vin rouge de Bourgogne?*" and then I hummed his little *chanson*, I am sure Col. Barthew will remember it, — "*Deux — gouttes — du vin rouge de Bourgogne.*"

My dear Mrs. Barthew, he sprang from his chair, and fell on his knees, and kissed my hands, before I could stop him. And when his mother and father, and all the rest, found that was the particular *sœur de la charité* who had had the care of dear Louis when he was hurt, and that it was I he had told of that very day, for the thousandth time, I believe, — who gave him that glass of claret, and cheered up his Christmas, I verily believe they would have taken me to the church to worship me. They were not satisfied, — the women with kissing me, or the men with shaking hands with each other, — the whole *auberge* had to be called in; and poor I was famous. I need not say I cried my eyes out; and when, at ten o'clock, they let me go to bed, I was worn out

with crying, and laughing, and talking, and listening; and I believe they were as much upset as I.

Now that is just the beginning; and yet I see I must stop. But, for forty-eight hours, I have been simply a queen. I can hardly put my foot to the ground. Christmas morning, these dear Thibault people came again, and then the *curé* came; and then some nice Madame Perrons came, and I went to mass with them; and, after mass, their brother's carriage came; and they would take no refusals; but with many apologies to my sweet old hostess, at the Three Cygnets, I was fain to come up to M. Firmin's lovely *château* here, and make myself at home till my friends shall arrive. It seems the poor Thibaults had come here to beg the flowers for the *étrenne*. It is really the most beautiful country residence I have seen in France; and they live on the most patriarchal footing with all the people round them. I am sure I ought to speak kindly of them. It is the most fascinating hospitality. So here am I, waiting, with my little *sac de nuit* to make me *aspettabile;* and here I ate my Christmas dinner. Tell the Colonel that here is "The Traveller's Tale;" and that is why the letter is so long.

Most truly yours,

Huldah Root.

IV

ONE CHRISTMAS MORE

This last Christmas party is Huldah's own. It is hers, at least, as much as it is any one's. There are five of them, nay six, with equal right

to precedence in the John o' Groat's house where she has settled down. It is one of those comfortable houses which are still left three miles out from the old State House in Boston. It is not all on one floor; that would be, perhaps, too like the golden courts of heaven. There are two stories; but they are connected by a central flight of stairs of easy tread (designed by Charles Cummings); so easy and so stately withal, that, as you pass over them, you always bless the builder and hardly know that you go up or down. Five large rooms on each floor give ample room for the five heads of the house, if, indeed, there be not six, as I said before.

In this Saints' Rest there have drifted together, by the eternal law of attraction, — Huldah, and Ellen Philbrick (who was with her in Virginia and in France, and has been, indeed, but little separated from her, except on duty, for twenty years), and with them three other friends. These women, — well, I cannot introduce them to you without writing three stories of true romance, one for each. This quiet, strong, meditative, helpful saint, who is coming into the parlor now, is Helen Touro. She was left alone with her baby when "The Empire State" went down; and her husband was never heard of more. The love of that baby warmed her to the love of all others; and when I first knew her, she was ruling over a home of babies, whose own mothers or fathers were not, — always with a heart big

enough to say there was room for one more waif in that sanctuary. That older woman, who is writing at the davenport in the corner, lightened the cares and smoothed the daily life of Gen. Schuyler in all the last years of his life, when he was in the Cabinet, in Brazil, and in Louisiana. His wife was long ill, and then died. His children needed all a woman's care; and this woman stepped to the front, cared for them, cared for all his household, cared for him: and I dare not say how much is due to her of that which you and I say daily we owe to him. Miss Peters, I see you know. She served in another regiment; was at the head of the sweetest, noblest, purest school that ever trained, in five-and-twenty years, five hundred girls to be the queens in five hundred happy and strong families. All of these five, — our Huldah and Mrs. Philbrick too, you have seen before, — all of them have been in "the service;" all of them have known that perfect service is perfect freedom. I think they know that perfect service is the highest honor. They have together taken this house, as they say, for the shelter and home of their old age. But Huldah, as she plays with your Harry there, does not look to me as if she were superannuated yet.

"But you said there were six in all."

"Did I? I suppose there are. Mrs. Philbrick, are there five captains in your establishment, or six?"

"My dear Mr. Hale, why do you ask me? You

know there are five captains and one general. We have persuaded Seth Corbet to make his home here, — yes, the same who went round the world with Mrs. Cradock. Since her death, he has come home to Boston; and he reports to us, and makes his head-quarters here. He sees that we are all right every morning; and then he goes his rounds to see every grandchild of old Mr. Cradock, and to make sure that every son and daughter of that house is 'all right.' Sometimes he is away over night. This is when somebody in the whole circle of all their friends is more sick than usual, and needs a man nurse. That old man was employed by old Mr. Cradock, in 1816, when he first went to housekeeping. He has had all the sons and all the daughters of that house in his arms; and now that the youngest of them is five-and-twenty, and the oldest fifty, I suppose he is not satisfied any day until he has seen that they and theirs, in their respective homes, are well. He thinks we here are babies; but he takes care of us all the more courteously."

"Will he dine with you to-day?"

"I am afraid not; but we shall see him at the Christmas-tree after dinner. There is to be a tree."

You see, this house was dedicated to the Apotheosis of Noble Ministry. Over the mantelpiece hung Raphael Morghen's large print of "The Lavatio," Caracci's picture of "The Washing of the Feet," — the only copy I ever saw. We asked Huldah about it.

"Oh, that was a present from Mr. Burchstadt, a rich manufacturer in Wirtemberg, to Ellen! She stumbled into one of those villages when everybody was sick and dying of typhus, and tended and watched and saved one whole summer long, as Mrs. Ware did at Osmotherly. And this Mr. Burchstadt wanted to do something; and he sent her this in acknowledgment."

On the other side was Kaulbach's own study of Elizabeth of Hungary, dropping her apron full of roses.

> "And oh! what a sight the apron discloses;
> The viands are changed to real roses!"

When I asked Huldah where that came from, she blushed, and said, "Oh, that was a present to me!" and led us to Steinler's exquisite "Good Shepherd," in a larger and finer print than I had ever seen. Six or eight gentlemen in New York, who, when they were dirty babies from the gutter, had been in Helen Touro's hands, had sent her a portfolio of beautiful prints, each with this same idea, of seeking what was lost. This one she had chosen for the sitting-room.

And, on the fourth side, was that dashing group of Horace Vernet's, "Gideon crossing Jordan," with the motto wrought into the frame, "Faint, yet pursuing." These four pictures are all presents to the "girls," as I find I still call them; and on the easel Miss Peters had put her copy of "The Tribute Money." There were

other pictures in the room; but these five unconsciously told its story.

The five "girls" were always all together at Christmas; but, in practice, each of them lived here only two-fifths of her time. "We make that a rule," said Ellen, laughing. "If anybody comes for anybody when there are only two here, those two are engaged to each other; and we stay. Not but what they can come and stay here if we cannot go to them." In practice, if any of us in the immense circles which these saints had befriended were in a scrape, — as, if a mother was called away from home, and there were some children left, or if scarlet fever got into a house, or if the children had nobody to go to Mt. Desert with them, or if the new house were to be set in order, and nobody knew how, — in any of the trials of well-ordered families, why, we rode over to the Saints' Rest to see if we could not induce one of the five to come and put things through. So that, in practice, there were seldom more than two on the spot there.

But we do not get to the Christmas-dinner. There were covers for four-and-twenty; and all the children besides were in a room upstairs, presided over by Maria Munroe, who was in her element there. Then our party of twenty-four included men and women of a thousand romances, who had learned and had shown the nobility of service. One or two of us were invited as novices, in the hope perhaps that we might learn.

Scarcely was the soup served when the door-bell rang. Nothing else ever made Huldah look nervous. Bartlett, who was there, said in an aside to me that he had seen her more calm when there was volley firing within hearing of her store-room. Then it rang again. Helen Touro talked more vehemently; and Mrs. Bartlett at her end started a great laugh. But when it rang the third time, something had to be said; and Huldah asked one of the girls who was waiting if there were no one attending at the door.

"Yes 'm; Mr. Corbet."

But the bell rang a fourth time, and a fifth.

"Isabel, you can go to the door. Mr. Corbet must have stepped out."

So Isabel went out, but returned with a face as broad as a soup-plate. "Mr. Corbet is there, ma'am."

Sixth door-bell peal, — seventh, and eighth.

"Mary, I think you had better see if Mr. Corbet has gone away."

Mary returns, face one broad grin.

"No, ma'am, Mr. Corbet is there."

Heavy steps in the red parlor. Side door-bell; a little gong begins to ring. Front bell rings ninth time, tenth, and eleventh.

Saint John, as we call him, had seen that something was amiss, and had kindly pitched in with a dissertation on the passage of the Red-River Dam, in which the gravy-boats were steam-ships, and the cranberry was Gen. Banks, and the

aids were spoons. But when both door-bells rang together, and there were more steps in the hall, Huldah said, "If you will excuse me," and rose from the table.

"No, no, we will not excuse you," cried Clara Hastings. "Nobody will excuse you. This is the one day of the year when you are not to work. Let me go." So Clara went out. And after Clara went out, the door-bells rang no more. I think there were still steps in the hall. She came back, and said a man was inquiring his way to the "Smells;" and they directed him to "Wait's Mills," which she hoped would do. And so Huldah's and Grace's stupendous housekeeping went on in its solid order, reminding one of those well-proportioned Worcester teas which are, perhaps, the crown and glory of the New-England science in this matter. I ventured to ask Sam Root, who sat by me, if the Marlborough were not equal to his mother's.

And we sat long; and we laughed loud. We talked war, and poetry, and genealogy. We rallied Helen Touro about her housekeeping; and Dr. Worster pretended to give a list of Surgeons and Majors and Major-Generals who had made love to Huldah. By and by, when the grapes and the bonbons came, the sixteen children were led in by Maria Munroe, who had, till now, kept them at games of string and hunt the slipper. And, at last, Seth Corbet flung open the door into the red parlor to announce "The Tree."

Sure enough, there was the tree, as the five saints had prepared it for the invited children, — glorious in gold, and white with wreaths of snowflakes, and blazing with candles. Sam Root kissed Grace, and said, "O Grace! do you remember?" But the tree itself did not surprise the children as much as the five tables at the right and the left, behind and before, amazed the Sainted Five, who were indeed the children now. A box of the *vin rouge de Bourgogne*, from Louis, was the first thing my eye lighted on, and above it a little banner read, "Huldah's table." And then I saw that there were these five tables, heaped with the Christmas offerings to the five saints. It proved that everybody, the world over, had heard that they had settled down. Everybody in the four hemispheres, — if there be four, — who had remembered the unselfish service of these five, had thought this a fit time for commemorating such unselfish love, were it only by such a present as a lump of coal. Almost everybody, I think, had made Seth Corbet a confidant; and so, while the five saints were planning their pretty tree for the sixteen children, the North and the South, and the East and the West were sending myrrh and frankincense and gold to them. The pictures were hung with Southern pine from Barthew. Boys, who were now men, had sent coral from India, pearl from Ceylon, and would have been glad to send ice from Greenland, had Christmas come in midsummer; — there were

diamonds from Brazil and silver from Nevada, from those who lived there; there were books, in the choicest binding, in memory of copies of the same word, worn by travel, or dabbled in blood; there were pictures, either by the hand of near friendship or by the master hand of genius, which brought back the memories, perhaps, of some old adventure in "The Service," — perhaps, as the Kaulbach did, of one of those histories which makes all service sacred. In five-and-twenty years of life, these women had so surrounded themselves, without knowing it or thinking of it, with loyal, yes, adoring friends, that the accident of their finding a fixed home had called in all at once this wealth of acknowledgment from those whom they might have forgotten, but who would never forget them. And, by the accident of our coming together, we saw, in these heaps on heaps of offerings of love, some faint record of the lives they had enlivened, the wounds they had stanched, the tears they had wiped away, and the homes they had cheered. For themselves, the five saints — as I have called them — were laughing and crying together, quite upset in the surprise. For ourselves, there was not one of us who, in this little visible display of the range of years of service, did not take in something more of the meaning of, —

"He who will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

The surprise, the excitement, the laughter, and

the tears found vent in the children's eagerness to be led to their tree; and in three minutes, Ellen was opening boxes, and Huldah pulling fire-crackers, as if they had not been thrown off their balance. But when each boy and girl had two arms full, and the fir-balsam sent down from New Durham was nearly bare, Edgar Bartlett pointed to the top bough, where was a brilliant not noticed before. No one had noticed it, — not Seth himself, — who had most of the other secrets of that house in his possession. I am sure that no man, woman, or child knew how the thing came there; but Seth lifted the little discoverer high in air; and he brought it down triumphant. It was a parcel made up in shining silvered paper. Seth cut the strings.

It contained twelve Maltese crosses of gold, with as many jewels, one in the heart of each, — I think the blazing twelve of the Revelations. They were displayed on ribbons of blue and white, six of which bore Huldah's, Helen's, Ellen Philbrick's, Hannah's, Miss Peters's, and Seth Corbet's names. The other six had no names; but on the gold of these was marked, — "From Huldah, to ——" "From Helen, to ——" and so on, as if these were decorations which they were to pass along. The saints themselves were the last to understand the decorations; but the rest of us caught the idea and pinned them on their breasts. As we did so, the ribbons

unfolded and displayed the motto of the order, —

"Henceforth I call you not servants, I have called you friends."

It was at that Christmas that the "ORDER OF LOVING SERVICE" was born.

HEPZIBAH'S TURKEYS

HEPZIBAH'S TURKEYS

INTRODUCTORY

IT is all sixteen years ago. Had the lives of the turkeys been spared, as they were not, they would all now be sweet seventeen. They might have rivalled in size the sixty-pound turkeys which Josselyn saw here two hundred years ago.[1]

But their lives were not spared.

The first I heard of the turkeys was as I came down from the pulpit on the Sunday morning before Thanksgiving. Miss Maria Jennings had worked her way to the neighborhood of the pulpit stairs, and beckoned me. I joined her.

"I wanted to ask you if you remember Hepzibah Brown?"

"Of course I do," said I — "the girl with the blind mother."

"The same," said Miss Maria. "You know she is in my Bible-class. I had thought that it would be a nice thing to suggest to the other girls, who have not the slightest idea what hardship is (as how should they?), to suggest to them

[1] "I have heard several credible persons affirm they have seen turkie-cocks that have weighed forty, yea, sixty pound." — Josselyn's "Wonders," *Archæologia Americana*, vol. iv. p. 144. I have seen one which turned the scale at thirty-nine. — E. E. H.

that we would surprise Hepsie and her mother with a Thanksgiving dinner. Poor souls, I do not know how else they should have one. You do not see any harm, do you?"

"Harm? Not the least," said I; "but a great deal of good, rather."

"She will not be offended or hurt, will she?"

"I never saw that she was a fool," said I. "If she is, we had better all of us find it out. I should say, though, that 'never anything can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it.'"

Miss Maria laughed and went her way; and when the Bible-class gathered, she proposed her little plan to those of the girls who came in before Hepzibah Brown did, and bade them propose it to those who came in after her. They were all pleased with the proposal, and as Monday and Tuesday passed, they brought round to Miss Maria more money for their contributions to the turkey than she really knew well what to do with. I met her Wednesday morning, and she told me so. But she said she had bought her turkey, and had ordered home with him squashes and apples and cranberries and a bag of flour. Then, as cranberries were useless without sugar and pies profitless without cheese, she had added twenty pounds of sugar and five of cheese. She had a little money left, and she was going to send a few pounds of tea to the old lady.

THE TURKEYS ARRIVE

Hepzibah Brown was most briefly described, as the reader has seen, "as the girl who had the blind mother." Her mother had lost her sight long, long before I knew anything about either of them; nor do I know how she lost it. I first found them living in two rooms, of which Hepzibah had to pay the rent weekly, and for which she provided the ways and means by the most difficult and trying works and days. She went out to "days' works," technically so called. She occasionally contracted to take in babies by the month, in which case she invariably spent on their milk much more than all the money paid to her; and in a sharp strain she took in slop-work to sew upon. But we all knew that times were indeed hard when she came to this resource.

For her mother there were several sources of revenue, which required nursing and tending worthy of Huskisson or Vansittart. There was the monthly payment of one dollar and sixty-two cents to each of the descendants of Jairus Hotchkiss. You had to go for this money at quarter before eleven on the second Friday before the third Thursday in the month. "It would derange my accounts," said the lady treasurer, "if they came at any other time." Then there was a dollar and a half a month from the Widows' Asso-

ciation. This you went for in the afternoon of the first Saturday in the month. It was steady pay; but it made it necessary for the old lady to stay in Boston through all the summer, for fear she would lose her "residence." Indeed, Hepzibah had once or twice been tempted to take lodgings in Dorchester, where rents were much lower; but she had resisted the temptation, because in that case she (or her mother, strictly) would have been cut off the list of the Association. For the Association saw some advantages which I do not see in keeping such people cooped up together in the town. The Overseers of the Poor of Boston have similar rules. The old lady drew two dollars a month from them; and she was right careful to go for that dole regularly, and not to slip into any bosky dells, to which it would not follow her. I think her husband had been a pump and block maker; and the "Seamen's Society," seeing that by virtue of the pumps he dealt in water and by virtue of the blocks was conversant with running rigging, took him on their lists, with a loyal indifference to red-tape, for which I blessed them.

That brought in a dollar and a quarter a month more.

Did I hear you grumbling, my dear Tyrus, because the Golconda and Crœsusberg divided only five and a half per cent in September, while you had had six per cent every six months before since you can remember?

Please spend half an hour, then, with a bit of paper, arranging your monthly personal expenses on such a scale of Debit that a little balance will be left to you when you have added up these four Credits:

Cr.

City of Boston,	$2.00
Jair. Hotchk.,	1.62½
Widows' Association,	1.50
Pump and Block,	1.25

I ask you to make out this little monthly statement of expenses — including your share of two dollars a week rent — because the calculation of these figures, arranged in different ways, took up most of the waking hours of Hepzibah Brown, when she lay awake at all.

For Hepzibah Brown herself, she tried hard not to beg, and liked to avail herself of the public means of culture and enjoyment. She was much more cheaply dressed than any of the other girls in Miss Maria's Bible-class. But she loyally came to the Bible-class, and I honored her for it, and so did Miss Maria. She sometimes indulged herself in tickets to a course of Lowell lectures on the "Non-metallic Bodies" or the "Correlation of Forces." She could get the tickets by standing in the street in a queue of half a mile, on her way home from Jairus Hotchkiss's. And in the evening, at the lectures, she saw the people. As she said herself, it saved gas and coal from seven o'clock till nine. It was true that the old lady could not see the experiments

or the other illustrations. But she liked society, was glad to be in a crowd; and, as Hepzibah truly said, it was hard to get her out, and this was a good excuse for a walk for her.

They kept up, I think, between themselves, at most times, the pretence of much more ease of circumstance than ever existed or had existed. Sometimes there had to be some such frank exhibit as I have made above. But in general both of them thought something was going to turn up. They had, as all cheerful people have, great facility at discounting all their anticipations. And it was only when some lady visitor of the Hotchkiss charity, or some committee on retrenchment of the "Association" forced Hepzibah to state the narrowness of her circumstances that she herself was really aware quite how hard her case was. She would, as I said, add up her mother's income in many different ways; but the result in all was substantially the same. Still, by casting it upon the basis of a year it seemed a good deal more than when she did it monthly. And she, therefore, sometimes indulged herself in observing that it was seventy-six dollars and fifty-one cents a year, and that was a great deal of money; and that with seventy-six dollars and fifty-one cents a great deal can be done. In general, they affected, even with each other, to be well satisfied with the outlook, and sure that the present hard times would soon be over, and things in general easier to everybody.

In this mood, on the Wednesday after Miss Maria made the move about the turkeys in the Bible-class, Hepzibah said, as she poured out her second cup of tea, as she and her mother lingered at breakfast:

"I don't mean to take much trouble about Thanksgiving this year. The last time I roasted a turkey it took a heap of wood and made me no end of trouble. I was glad o' the trouble, 'cause I knew poor Jethro 'd have no turkey anywhere else. And he did take pleasure in that turkey, anyway. But Jethro (well, I s'pose Jethro must be in the Sandwich Islands, mother, now,) he won't be here. And Sally told me she should be out to Melrose. There won't be nobody but you and me, and I don't think it 's worth while bothering about the turkey. I 've got to go at one to help 'em at Miss Scarlett's. They 'll have a heap of people to-morrow, and I told Miss Scarlett 't, if I could, I 'd come round. It would be a plague to you to be fussing over the gravy if we had the turkey; so I guess we won't have none. When I get home from Miss Scarlett's I 'll just roll out a little paste, and I can mix up and kind o' stew a few cran'bries 'fore I go to bed; and if you 'd stone some raisins, as you sit here to-day, I 'll mix a little plum-pudding to-morrow, and we 'll call that our Thanksgiving."

The old lady expressed her entire satisfaction, said she should eat no turkey herself, if they had any; that she thought it would be as much bother

to her as it would be to Hepzibah. And they thus disguised from each other the truth, which was perfectly well known to both of them, that a turkey for Thanksgiving was as unattainable as was Aladdin's roc or a roc's egg, had they taken any fancy that way.

At noon the two took another cup of tea together and each ate a cold sausage. Hepzibah said she was rather in a hurry to get round to Miss Scarlett's, because they would not be able to do nothing till she got there, and would be kinder expecting her. She would not get a regular dinner, therefore, at home, unless her mother particularly wished it. Her mother replied that she did not feel much like eating, and had thought of suggesting that they should not set the table for dinner, but have a bit of bread and butter and a cup of tea. So they were both satisfied, or pretended to be, and Hepzibah went to Miss Scarlett's.

She had not been gone more than half an hour when the old lady, sitting in that eternal darkness, was roused from her after-luncheon doze by a rap at the door. She cried, "Come in!" as loudly as her weak old voice would say so; and Miss Maria entered, cheerily and cordially. She was no stranger in the place, and Mrs. Brown recognized her knock, step, and voice immediately. Miss Maria was a little disappointed that she did not find Hepzibah; but was glad to find she had "got work." She inquired carefully

about Mrs. Brown's health and, which was much more to the point, listened faithfully and patiently to the old lady's answer — a thing philanthropists are not quite so sure to do as they are to make the proper inquiries. Miss Maria then said she thought times were going to mend, and that it would be a mild winter, and that work would be more plenty than ever, and that she thought Hepzibah would have more than she could do; for which opinions I am afraid Miss Maria was largely indebted to a cheerful temper. Still, as she held them, in a certain form, I am glad that she expressed them to poor old Mrs. Brown, who certainly needed all the comfort she could pick up, and whose means of knowing the "mind of the street" on such subjects were limited. Then Miss Maria said she could not make a long call, and came to the proper object of her visit.

She went to the door, and, with her own red right hand, brought in the turkey, which she had waiting there for a surprise. Ah me! There was no need of leaving it outside to surprise old Mrs. Brown. Miss Maria might have brought in a feather-bed on her back and the old lady would not have known it in that eternal midnight.

As it was, Miss Maria brought in her plump eleven-pounder and put it on the table at the old lady's side, and explained that the young ladies at the Bible-class had arranged the dinner as a surprise for Hepzibah, and made as if she had

herself nothing to do with the affair. Then she tapped at the window, and Phineas came upstairs from the doorway, where he had been waiting for the proper moment in the surprise, with the sugar and tea and cranberries and squashes, the cheese and apples, and the bag of flour. She explained what these "fixin's" were and was about to leave somewhat abruptly, when the old lady, who was really very thankful and behaved very sweetly through the whole, asked her if Phineas would mind putting all the things into the store-closet, and laying the turkey on a certain shelf which she described, high above the highest flight of the cat in the back entry. For, she said, it occurred to her that it would be very good fun to surprise Hepzibah when she came back from Miss Scarlett's. I ought perhaps to mention in this place that it was now forty years since "Miss" Scarlett had been united in marriage to the Hon. Le Fevre Scarlett — she having been Miss Lilian White — and that the title "Miss" was merely the form used by the aborigines in describing the condition of honorable wedlock.

Phineas gladly fell in with all Mrs. Brown's devices, and the stores were concealed according to her order. She had relapsed into stoning the raisins, after knitting a few rounds on a long stocking, which "Miss" Plumptre had sent the yarn for, and which was to be sent to a Maori chieftain when it was finished and when its companion was finished. But she was aroused again

by the sharp closing of the outer door downstairs. There was no room for question as to the step on the stairs this time. Men and angels knew that step as the step of Officer Fosdick, who was this week on the day patrol in Lucas Street; and Mrs. Brown, who was neither a man nor an angel, knew it as well as if she had been both at once. Hastily she ran through the little catalogue of her sins and Hepzibah's, inquiring which of them fell within the category of crimes prohibited by the law. She was certain that they had not thrown marbles at an auctioneer, as Harry Griggs did, who was sent to Westborough for doing it. Certainly they had not lifted ribbons from Mudge's, as that odious Miss Farrelly did, in the next house, when the neighborhood was disgraced by her arrest. She knew that the pipes and faucets had not been protected against the cold; but she did not believe that there yet had been any frost hard enough to catch them, and she and Hepsie were, as usual, running for luck, in the hope that there might not be. As Officer Fosdick stumped up the stairs Mrs. Brown thus exhausted her catalogue of crime, and with conscious innocence uttered a severe "Come in!"

"How do, Miss Smith?" said Officer Fosdick, civilly enough. "Thanky, mum, I 'm pretty well myself. Is n't your daughter to home?"

"No, sir," said Mrs. Brown, still with conscious innocence and greatly aggrieved. "Hepzi-

bah is not at home." Was she to rejoice or not at her absence? Suppose Hepzibah were to be arrested at some distance from home, what would become of Mrs. Brown?

"Sorry, mum," said Officer Fosdick; "but it 's just as well, seeing you are." Horrible suspense to Mrs. Brown! Suppose she were arrested and haled to prison, as Paul and Silas were at Philippi, what would happen when Hepzibah returned?

But the suspense did not last many seconds. Officer Fosdick continued, in a tone which showed that he was well pleased:

"The captain sends his compliments, mum, to you and your daughter, mum; and here 's a turkey, mum, for Thanksgiving. There 's been a little subscription at the station, mum, to give turkeys to them as might not — well, as might not have thought to buy 'em, mum, and the captain said himself, mum, that he wanted to be sure you had one, mum."

It was well that the officer's speech was long, for Mrs. Brown thought at the beginning that he was announcing the same turkey which Miss Jennings had brought. But she recovered herself, without betraying the fact that another turkey had arrived, which might have mortified him. She thanked him very courteously, and then, at his request, "hefted" the turkey; the only way by which she could judge what a "noble crittur it was." She then asked him if he would

be so kind as to put it into the closet, which she pointed out to him, next the stove.

Officer Fosdick did so. If he were a little surprised at seeing the squashes and parcels which Phineas had left there, he said nothing. "I 've hung her up, mum, on a nail they is in the top shelf, mum," said he. And Mrs. Brown thanked him, and he bade farewell.

She fell back upon her knitting and upon planning out the devices by which she would make of the two turkeys a surprise to Hepzibah when she returned. But she had not knit twenty times round when she heard the outer door open and shut again. Nobody ever rings at these lodging-houses; indeed, the bell-wires were long since broken at all of them. The step this time was wholly unknown to Mrs. Brown. But the stranger did not pass the door, but knocked loudly.

"Come in."

"Do Mrs. and Miss Brown live here?" said the gray-coated coachman, whip in hand, who entered.

"I am Mrs. Brown. My daughter is not at home."

"Just as well, ma'am," and the man disappeared. But it was to return in a moment. "Mrs. Cradock sends her compliments, and hopes Mrs. Brown and Miss Brown will have a pleasant Thanksgiving. And Mrs. Cradock sends a turkey and a few other things. Where shall I leave them, ma'am?"

"Oh, just put them on the table. Thank you kindly. And tell Mrs. Cradock that we are very much obliged, I am sure. I hope she 's very well."

"Thank you, ma'am, she 's very well. Good-bye, ma'am. I can't leave my horses." And the gray coachman, who to Mrs. Brown was no more gray than green, disappeared.

"Well, now," said she, as she crossed and "hefted" turkey No. 3, and smelled at the heavy package of Bohea, and did the same by the two squash pies that the man had left — "well, now, how shall I keep these out of Hepzibah's sight?" Carefully and successfully she opened a crypt under the sink, moved the pots all to one end, hung the turkey on a nail she remembered there, and then one by one she placed the other bounties in the store-closet, as she might.

A good deal flustered, she returned to her chair, to find that there were but three needles in her stocking. This was a serious matter. And Mrs. Brown was on her knees on the floor, groping for the fourth needle, when she heard another rat-tat-tat at the door. She hurried to her feet as soon as she could and gave permission to enter.

It was Hitty. Hitty was wholly out of breath. "Miss Brown, I was standing up to the head of the court, and a lady come by and asked if I knew where Miss Hepzibah Brown lived. And I said it was No. 7, up the street, up one flight. And she says, says she, 'I 'm a little late for my car,'

says she — just so. 'Will you just carry this turkey to Miss Hepzibah Brown, with my love?' And then she stopped; says she, 'It's Miss Brown that has a blind mother.' And I said, yes, Miss Hepsy Brown had a blind mother. And she gin me ten cents for bringing it, and here it is."

"Why, Hitty," said the old lady, amazed, "who was the lady?"

"Don't know," said Hitty. "I asked her, says I, 'Who shall I say it is?' says I. And she says, says she, 'Oh, she'll know,' says she. So she called the Norfolk House car that was passing; and she got in, she did; and I come up here with the turkey, and here it is. It's real heavy, Miss Brown, and it's a beauty. I wish you could see it, Miss Brown. But do just heft it."

So Mrs. Brown "hefted" the turkey, as she had hefted three others.

"And now, Hitty, will you help me look for my knitting-needle. I was on the floor looking for it."

"It's pretty dark this side of the room, Miss Brown. Might I light a lamp?"

Poor Mrs. Brown! It was as light to her as it was by the window. Hitty lighted her lamp and went on her knees for the exploration. Rising, a little exhausted by the bending, she cried out, "Here it is, Miss Brown."

"Where was it, my dear child?"

"Oh, jest behind you, mum. Good-bye."

Hitty's grammar was imperfect; but she had native politeness enough not to tell the old lady that the lost needle was stuck in her back hair. Unless some one reads to her this story, she will never know where that needle was till she dies.

She took the needle and worked faithfully on upon the Maori chieftain's stocking. Whether more turkeys would arrive she wondered. Whether she would secrete number four, or leave it where Hitty laid it. Finally she hung it on a nail behind the door by which Hepzibah would enter. So she knitted and dozed, and dozed and knitted. When the somewhat shaky clock which we then had on our church-tower struck seven, she laid down the Maori's garment, filled the teapot, put it on the stove, and filled up with kindling and wood. To say true, Mrs. Brown had wrapped her shawl tight round her as the afternoon passed, but had made no more fire than Hepzibah had left. She knew that Hepzibah might leave "Miss Scarlett's" as early as seven.

But it was eight and after before Hepzibah came. The tea-kettle had boiled long before (or the water in it), and had been set back to the rear of the stove for a decorous simmer there. At last the well-known step sounded on the stair, and the hard-worked, long-waited-for absentee returned. She slyly laid down in the sink something heavy which she had in her hand, and came to her mother and kissed her; a token wholly

unusual and unexpected in that establishment, in which no sentiment was ever wasted.

"What do you think, mammy, dear? I've changed my mind, and we will have a Thanksgiving dinner after all."

"How did she know?" This was Mrs. Brown's only thought.

"You see, we had to fly round at Miss Scarlett's, I tell you. They're going to have all his brothers, and her sisters, and two judges from England, and I dunno what all, to dinner — goin' to set the table cornerwise in the big parlor of all; and then they have a late tea and supper together, and have all the cousins 'way from West Newton and Brahntry — seventy-four in all. Jane Scarlett says to me, says she, 'Ther' 'll be seventy-four in all if the weather's fine, so Miss Byfield ken bring in her twins,' says she. And their famous Mrs. Midge, the grand cook, that they spoke for three months ago — she that makes their Marlboroughs and their open-top apple-pies — she had n't come nigh 'em when I got there; and Miss Scarlett and Jane Scarlett had to take hold themselves, and I had to spring to, I tell you; and we have had a smart time of it since I was here. Well, I had my tea there; and just as I come away, Miss Scarlett, says she, 'Hepsy,' says she, 'you let John go home with you,' says she, 'and let him carry this turkey,' says she, 'for your mother,' says she; 'for,' says she, 'your mother won't feel like going out to-

morrow, Hepsy,' says she, 'and so,' says she, 'she better have her turkey to home, Hepsy,' says she. 'She did,' says she. So here 's your turkey, mammy. He 's a beauty. Do just heft him."

And Mrs. Brown hefted the fifth turkey. She was a little grieved to find the wind, in a measure, taken out of her sails; but she concealed her grief, and in the darkness Hepzibah did not observe her expression. While she was busying herself in replenishing the fire, Mrs. Brown crossed the room and lifted down No. 4, so that he lay by the side of No. 5. Then as Hepsy rose from her puffing and blowing and lighted the lamp, she saw in a moment that there were twins where she had laid but one turkey; and then the old lady was well satisfied with her amazement.

It is easy to imagine how she went on — how, when Hepsy opened the closet, to find No. 2, and the stores which surrounded him, the good old soul had one triumph more; how then, by clumsy artifices, she made her look under the sink for No. 3; and at last fairly sent her into the back entry to see No. 1 upon his supra-feline shelf. A jolly evening had Mrs. Brown and Hepzibah with their jorums of tea from Miss Maria's paper and with the successive surprises.

They had both got to bed and the light was blown out, when the outer door swung open again, and one more tramp was to be heard on the stairway.

"Gracious, mercy! More turkeys!" cried Mrs. Brown.

"No," groaned Hepsy, "it is not turkeys this time. It 's that drunken MacDonnell thundering up to beat his wife again."

Drunk or sober, the thunderer stopped at Hepsy's door and knocked.

"Who 's there?"

"Adams's Express. Parcel to be left to-night. Marked '*without fail*,'" replied the thunderer, more good-naturedly than was to be expected.

Hepsy was striking a match. She arranged some hurried and superficial toilet and in a couple of minutes opened a crack of the door.

"You must give me more room, mum, or I can't get him in," said the good-natured thunderer.

"*Him?* Who is he?"

But as Hepsy opened the door wider, he appeared. The largest turkey of all, with his wings not clipped off.

"Orders are strict to be delivered to-night. Train late, mum — hopped a frog at Wilmington Junction. Guess the turkey 's for Thanksgiving."

This last with a broad grin, as if the purpose might be questionable.

Sure enough, to Hepzibah's wondering eyes there appeared a large label: "To Miss Hepzibah Brown, No. 7 Lucas Street, second floor, with the respects of Ezekiel Hopkins. To be delivered this evening, WITHOUT FAIL." The gigantic

letters at the close were enough to have alarmed or, at least, excited any reasonable expressman; nor had they failed.

Now, Ezekiel Hopkins was a tinman from Ipswich, who had been on the steamer "Creole" when Hepsy and her mother joined in the Foresters' excursion in the harbor, in September.

"Please receipt, mum," said the well-satisfied thunderer. And with trembling hand Hepzibah signed the receipt in his book. She bade the thunderer "good-night" and retired this time to unbroken slumbers.

Yes, Mathilde, to slumbers. She had had a turkey sent her from Ezekiel Hopkins. But she had scoured floors all the morning and worked loyally at the Scarlett's till near eight in the evening, and so she slept soundly, and would have done so had Ezekiel Hopkins sent three turkeys.

THANKSGIVING MORNING

I am ashamed to confess that when, the next Sunday, Hepzibah Brown gave me the heads of this story, briefly, as we left the church together, I was carnal enough to say:

"Well, I suppose Silas Brackett was glad to take off your hands all the turkeys you could not use."

Now, Silas Brackett kept the "provision store,"

as we Yankees call a small meat market, at the corner.

"I dare say," said Hepzibah, as proud as Juno; "but he had no turkeys of mine to sell."

And I was thoroughly shamed when she added:

"I knew plenty of *poor* people that had no Thanksgiving dinner."

The emphasis on *poor* was superb. For once, Hepsy had had the satisfaction of dispensing charity; and no Mrs. Cradock, or Officer Fosdick, or Maria Jennings of them all would discharge that office more grandly nor more kindly than she.

She told me nothing about it; but there was little which passed in Lucas Street, or Carney Place, or Orange Lane in those days which was not reported before the week was over to one or other of the saints who were at work in our sewing-room, and without much difficulty I was able to patch out the story I now tell to you.

Hepsy and her mother slept late on Thanksgiving morning. There was no "day's work" to be grateful for, at which one must report at seven o'clock, breakfast already eaten. Hepsy took the good of her bed for once and then made a fire lavishly. She had a week's provant in the house, and that was a very long forelook for her. A sumptuous breakfast she and Mrs. Brown made; and then Hepsy assumed the Lady Bountiful, as if she had been born to the position.

"I hate to leave you, mother; but it 's Thanks-

giving day, and I think, before meeting, I'll just step round into Orange Lane and see how those poor Flannagans get on. I had n't any time to go and see them yesterday. We sha'n't want to put our turkey in the oven before eleven. I'll just stuff him and get him ready now, and then I'll be back in time to put him in. Perhaps you would not mind pounding the cracker."

All this without the slightest allusion to the theory of yesterday morning's breakfast, that the roasting of the turkey would be a useless bother.

So they quickly got the great fowl ready, and then Hepsy arrayed herself in her Sunday's best for her visit to the Flannagans. Ah me! That was what the philanthropists are apt to say is "not a good case." Indeed, it was not a good case. Hepsy went in cordially, but with a consciousness of her dignity and position, and of the distinction which must be preserved between the classes of society. Mrs. Flannagan, care-worn and wretched, welcomed her and wiped the seat of the only chair with her apron. Hepsy inquired by name after the children, and then how Mike was doing. "How do you do?" means one thing, my dear Mrs. Whitehead or my dear Mrs. Lovechild, when Fanny comes running into your parlor, and says, "How do you do?" to you. But when you ask how Mike Flannagan is doing, the question means simply is he getting along without making a beast of himself or no. Alas! Mike was not doing well. He had assisted in a

turkey raffle the night before to such purpose that he had spent all the money which they would advance him at Hinckley's, that he had won no turkey, and that he had been brought back at one in the morning by Britt and Flinders, who were only not quite so drunk as he was. Mrs. Flannagan pointed sadly into the dark alcove, on the straw on the bottom of which Mike was sleeping off his whiskey, much as a pig might sleep in the covered part of his sty.

"Too bad," said Hepsy. "Too bad, Mary. Hanging is not good enough for them that give him the liquor. But he's well at home now. I'll come round in the morning with Mac, and we'll make him take the pledge before he goes out. Don't you say a word to him to-day. I came 'round because I want Larry for an hour or two; and if you will let him come with me he shall bring you a nice turkey for your Thanksgiving dinner. So do you take heart, Mary, and you shall have a good, pleasant Thanksgiving, after all. You see my turkey raffle turned out better than Mike's."

Poor Mary would not laugh, but she gave her consent gladly enough to Larry's going with Hepsy, and Hepsy started in search of him among the boys who were skating on the frozen puddle behind the stables.

Larry, as need hardly be said, was immensely excited by the commission. He borrowed Hiram Flinders's four-wheel, when he found what was

in the wind, went back with Hepsy to Lucas Street, took in his freight, and decorously accompanied her, with as much dignity as Mrs. Cradock's coachman would have shown on the morning's expedition. First they came back to his mother's; and Mrs. Flannagan had to take a regular talking to from Lady Bountiful as to how the turkey was to be stuffed and basted. Let us trust that she obeyed the injunctions. Then they went to little Mrs. Serz, in the cellar in Castle Street. Hepsy worked her way in with some difficulty, for the muslin skirt of Gertrude MacFlimsey hung across the room from one side to another, as it was drying. In the window corner Mrs. Serz was doing crimping, or fluting, or clear starching, or some deed without a name.

"Good-morning, Miss Serz."

"*Guten Morgen, guten Morgen.*"

"A nice day for Thanksgiving, Miss Serz."

"*Nicht verstehe, nicht verstehe.*"

"Glad to see you so well. But it's a shame you have to work on Thanksgiving."

"*Nicht verstehe, nicht verstehe.*"

"Thank you kindly, she's very well. We had a turkey we could not use, Mrs. Serz, and I thought you might like it."

Mrs. Serz was a little amazed by this time and looked for Constance, who could interpret a little. But Hepsy was before her, and called in Larry.

"Here's the turkey, Miss Serz. And if you have got a little cracker, you can pound it with

sweet marjoram. We think that makes better stuffing, in our country, than bread and onions do." This last she said very loud, from the fear that it might not be entirely intelligible.

Mrs. Serz looked with amazement at the turkey, wiped her hands and "hefted" him, and said:

"*Danke, danke.*"

"I say without onions. Onions are better with geese. But I put in this little paper of sweet marjoram. It is some I brought from Tuxbury." This last very loud, as Mrs. Serz seemed somewhat doubtful.

"*Danke, danke,*" said that lady again.

And Hepsy withdrew. Larry followed, crestfallen. Why did she say "Donkey," he asked Miss Hepsy, meekly. But Miss Hepsy returned no answer.

"Larry," said she, after a little consideration, "we must go next to Phil Regan's; and then we will come back by Suffolk Street, to them Eyetallians."

To Phil Regan's attic they repaired, therefore. Phil was not at home. He was blacking shoes at the Albany Station. But Phil's smart little sister Florence was in, and the other two little ones. No school. So Hepsy took off her bonnet and shawl, mixed the cracker crumbs to suit herself, and explained carefully to Florence how she wished to have the turkey basted, and with her own hands put it into the pan and put the pan into the oven, giving Florence strict directions

how to tend it and watch over it till Phil returned. Brave Phil Regan, the head of that household! I wonder where he is to-day, and whether he will read this. He was then just fourteen years old.

At the Eyetallians much such a scene transpired as at Mrs. Serz's, Hepsy being wholly ignorant of any dialect of the Tuscan tongue; and the Eyetallians, who had come on from New York only ten days before, equally ignorant of English. But there was no misunderstanding Miss Hepsy's kindness of intention; and as she spoke very loud here, it is to be hoped that the Eyetallians understood the greater part of her directions to them. Anyway, the two women, with many "*grazie*," took the turkey as gently as if it had been a baby, and Hepsy, in a thorough examination of the attic, well-nigh empty, was soon satisfied that no one had been before her there. Nay, she even wondered whether in the calendar of these poor Roman Catholics the name of "Thanksgiving" had ever come in before. But by mentioning it sufficiently loudly she felt sure that she should fix it in their minds.

As they went back toward Lucas Street, Larry following behind, a carriage, driving fast, passed them.

"Miss Hepsy, Miss Hepsy!" cried Larry, out of breath. "Sure as I live, there 's your mother goin' to ride."

"Nonsense, Larry. None of your stuff."

"I say, Miss Hepsy, it was your mother, sure as I live and breathe."

"Hold your tongue, Larry."

And he held it.

But when Hepsy had climbed the stairway to her own home, sure enough the bird had flown. Mrs. Brown was not there. Nobody was there.

Hepsy ran into the bedroom in a fright. No mother there. She came back to Larry, and questioned him. He was stanch in saying that the old lady was in the kerridge.

Hepsy returned amazed to the sitting-room which her mother had not left without her for five years and more.

As she entered it by one door, the door to the back passage opened also, and two fresh, pretty girls came out, one bearing Miss Maria's turkey in state, and the other following with a dredging-box and an armful of other cooking tools.

"O Hepsy, you have caught us. That 's too bad!"

And they all laughed heartily.

It was Ruth Faxon and Fanny Melcher. They had come round with Mrs. Granger, resolved to make Mrs. Brown and Hepsy go off to meeting, while they cooked the turkey. Hepsy was to be free from care that day, if it could be managed.

"And now, you provoking old thing, you went and stayed out till the bell had done tolling, and you have spoiled all. But we dressed up your dear old mother, and Mrs. Granger has carried

her away; and don't you think, Hepsy, now, that you had better go, too, and tell us what the text is?"

"Fiddlestick for the text," said Hepsy, hanging up her go-to-meeting shawl and bonnet in her chamber, and coming out with her sleeves rolled up, as if she, too, were going into action.

"What do you mean by interfering with other people's work?" said Fanny; and she took her fast by both arms and pushed her back into her mother's deep arm-chair.

"There, you provoking old thing, if you do mean to stay and spy on us, sit there, and see if we do not know how to do it right. You are a fine lady to-day, just recovering from a fit of neuralgia, and you have just stepped into your kitchen for a minute to see if these two girls that have just come down from Nova Scotia and want a place together, know beans or not. Oh dear! I have not had such a lark since we were all at the Winthrop together!"

The Winthrop, dear Matilda, was not a hotel, but a school, where these three girls had studied arithmetic, side by side, under Miss Barry's eye, when they were all fourteen years old.

And a genuine lark they had of it. Neatly and deftly these two girls prepared and baked the turkey, boiled the squash, baked the potatoes, thickened the gravy, sweetened the cranberry to Hepsy's taste, and, in short, made all things ready for the dinner. They asked her for her

orders sometimes; but when she herself undertook to do anything, one or other of them pushed her back into the easy-chair. Ruth gave her a smelling-bottle, which she raked out from a deep pocket, and folded a New York *Ledger* into a great fan, and made her hold the fan in one hand and salts in the other. Hepsy entered into the joke as much as they did, and took airs admirably well.

By the time Mrs. Brown had come home, the dinner was cooked, the table was neatly set, and everything was ready.

"Hepsy," said the old lady, "come here." And she whispered to her daughter.

Hepsy laughed, and said openly to the girls that her mother was so much pleased with the festivity, that she wanted to bring out her silver spoons. And, sure enough, the six teaspoons and the six tablespoons were produced from the old lady's trunk — the one wreck from old prosperity.

"I do not choose to use them every day," said Hepsy, laughing, "we have such queer people round us. But to-day mammy feels grand."

And then the two girls went away, only feeling a little dashed, as pretty Ruth Faxon confessed to me, that they left the two all alone.

The minute they were gone, before dinner began, Hepsy dashed into the back entry and seized turkey No. 6, which Fanny had left all dressed and ready for the oven, put him in a pan,

and slid it into the stove. "I 'm not going to waste this good fire," said she. "And I like a cold turkey about as well as I do a warm one. This will do for Sunday's dinner."

The old lady said that, of the two, she was not sure but sometimes she liked a cold turkey better than a warm one. Just now she was glad they had a hot one. The opinion, you see, was rather a difficult one to form and to express. But Mrs. Brown had long experience in contentedness. Turkey No. 6 being well slid into the oven, dinner began.

But scarcely had Hepzibah begun her carving when steps were heard on the stairs, which indicated a party.

"I guess Miss Meldrum has company," said she.

No. It was not Miss Meldrum.

Knock at the door — double knock.

"Well, I never!" said the old lady. "'Nother turkey, Hepsy?"

For Mrs. Brown was up to joking-mark now. Hepsy opened the door.

"Well now!" "How *do* you do?" "And how do *you* do?" "Well! what luck!" "Who'd a thought it?" "And there 's your mother." "How d'ye do, Aunt Rachel?" "But who is it?" "Well, now!" "Well, now!" Scatter these ejaculations as you please, and you get the interview. They were cousins of Hepzibah's, whom she had not seen for fifteen years. They were on their way from New York to Cape Eliza-

beth, to dine at Hepsy's uncle's. Boat was delayed, and they had missed their train. Thought they would hunt up Hepsy and take their Thanksgiving dinner with her, and so go on in the night boat to Portland. Not unprosperous cousins, you see. Cousins who had no idea that Hepsy and her mother were uncomfortably near the wall. Cousins for whom Hepsy had a certain respect, and she would have hated to have them know her scrapings and worries.

"And here they come in, Mr. Hale, as nice and neat as pins; and though I say it, who should not, Mr. Hale, we was just as nice as they was. Mother, she did look real nice, Mr. Hale; real handsome she looked, with her cap on. And the table was so pretty — with Miss Granger's flowers, and the silver, and all. I did not care who they were; my dinner was as good as theirs any day. So they washed themselves and fixed their hair, and sat down, all three of them, they did. And we had a nice time, I tell you."

Hepsy did not tell me one little incident of the dinner; but Mrs. Meldrum did.

As they were finishing Mrs. Cradock's pies, drinking their tea, and fooling with their nuts and raisins, little Katy Meldrum came in.

"Please, Miss Hepsy, mother says will you lend her a little tea?"

"Heart's grace, Katy. Of course, I will. Why, Katy, you look cold." Katy whispered that they had nothing but a little kindling.

"No coal? Poor child! Cousin Hannah, excuse me."

And Hepsy went into the entry and carried up a hod of coal to the stricken widow upstairs.

"Do you think," she said, as she came down, "they was all sitting round freezing, and Miss Meldrum just lighting some laths the boys had brought in from the new school-house. And they 've nothing for their dinner but some bread and cheese that look as if it was cut last Sunday. Here, Tom, you come in. Come in, Katy."

And she opened her oven door, and with the tongs pulled out No. 6, and placed the pan on a stout paper in her clothes-basket.

"Tom, you take one end. Katy, you take one. Tell your mother I 've been cooking her dinner for her, only I was a little belated by company. Katy, come down again. Here 's plenty of squash pie and two or three pertaters left. To think," said Hepsy, as she sat down a little flustered — "to think of plenty and hunger being so close to each other. I thought Mr. Fosdick had taken the Meldrums some dinner."

And then the feast went on with the three cousins, as if this were all an everyday occurrence. They went to their graves with the idea that Hepsy was living on the fat of the land. And if any one thing delighted Hepsy more than another in that day's Thanksgiving, it was that her cousins thought so.

Among them they brought Miss Maria's turkey

near his end; but Hepsy told me that he made a very good dinner on Friday.

It may add to the interest with which this little story is read for me to say that it is substantially true in all its details.

The Independent asked me near a year ago to furnish a story of true life from my ministerial experience. On such stories there is apt to be a seal of confidence. But I do not see that any of the parties whom, under fictitious names, I have mentioned here, has reason to be ashamed of his part in the day, always excepting Mike Flannagan.

I have lost the run of him; but I trust that he has taken Father Mathew's medal and has reformed.

OUR NEW CRUSADE

OUR NEW CRUSADE

CHAPTER I

A VISIT TO THE DERITEND

I HAD observed at breakfast that Aunt Lois had looked dull.

Every one else had observed it, though of course no one said so. She gave us all our coffee, she pretended to take her own fried potatoes and omelette, but she ate nothing, and she said nothing. Now this is quite unusual with Aunt Lois. Generally, she keeps the children in order, carries on half the talk, sees that no cup is empty, and eats her own breakfast, all at the same time; and this with magnetism that nothing can resist, or, if you please, with life which quickens the whole company.

But this morning there had been no doubt but that Aunt Lois looked dull.

I was not at home at dinner; and, as it proved, few of the rest of them were. When I did come home, an hour before tea-time, as I sat on the veranda with Bernard, he told me why Aunt Lois had looked dull at breakfast.

The day had come at last when the committee of ladies, appointed by our Woman's Christian

Temperance Union, to wait on all the liquor sellers in town, was to divide itself into its sub-committees, and go about its disagreeable business. Aunt Lois, as being the wife of Dr. Claridge, who was so long the president of our college, is, almost of course, the president of the Union. Whether Aunt Lois would herself have moved the appointment of committees to wait on the tavern-keepers, I do not know. But women stand by each other; and when the Union had voted the committees, and had made the president chairman, she did not shirk, even if she did shrink. When the great committee divided itself into sub-committees, the sub-committee to visit the Deritend House was of course most important, and first named. And of this sub-committee Aunt Lois was the chairman. That was the reason that she was low-spirited at breakfast, when the day came for them to visit the Deritend.

You were never at the Deritend? Then you can never have come to Bromwich without an invitation from one of the professors' families to come direct to his house. For the Deritend House is the only tolerable hotel in the town. Mrs. Grundy has always said that, if the professors were not so hospitable, the Deritend would be a better hotel; but that the college folks choose to invite all the "better travel" to their own houses, and none but commercial travellers, otherwise called "drummers" and even less profitable visitors, are left for the public entertainment. As to

this, I know nothing. I had never slept in the Deritend, nor so much as bought a cigar there, nor borrowed a toothpick, before the morning of Aunt Lois's visit. Yet I also should have been taken aback, had I gone down town, and seen the Deritend closed. It was a public necessity, there was no doubt of that; but it was a public necessity which neither I nor mine ever cared about, or for which we ever lifted a finger.

There it stood fronting the Common, cornerwise from the Methodist church, — a great ugly brick house, which had once been painted; a monument of the old turnpike days, when there were six stages out of Cumberland which stopped here for breakfast every day, and six stages into Cumberland which stopped here for supper, and any number of emigrant wagons, the summer through, of which the horses were fed in the Deritend stables. It had unfortunately outlived the emigrant days and the turnpike days. The piazzas were rotting down; but no one had any money to renew their steps, or even their planking. The wires of the bells were breaking from year to year; but the proprietors had long ceased to pay for repairs, and the lessees could not think of bell-wires. The paint, as I said, was wearing off. Still the Deritend, which was really a third-class inn, pretended to be a "first-class hotel." It had no sign, for instance. A truly "first-class hotel" never does have one. It still used printed bills of fare for dinner, many thousand being left

from some old administration. From these Horace Gregg scored off with his pen every day three-fourths of the viands named, and trusted to luck that his few guests would not ask for half what were left. For the Deritend kept up the respectabilities as well as it could, but really was an institution to be pitied, rather than to be blamed. Here it was, anchored in this corner, where there was a certain work to do, having been itself formed and ordered for work utterly different. So have I seen a good woman, who would have kept a comfortable boarding-house with pleasure to herself and to its inmates, made wretched because she was left to be a fine lady with nothing to do; and I have seen a woman, who would have done very good service as a baroness or countess with plenty of money to spend, made wretched in her turn because she kept a boarding-house badly, and knew she did. Such was the Deritend.

Well, at supper I think Aunt Lois was more cheerful, or at least made an effort to appear so. Nobody asked what had happened at the Deritend House; but it was clear enough that the Committee to which she belonged had done its duty, and that that weight was off her mind. As she washed the tea-cups in her nice little table-tub, she began to tell us, of her own accord, the funny things that had happened in the interview with the Deritend people, then the more serious things, and at last the sad things; and before the evening

was over, in the intervals between visitors and the mail and letter-writing, we had all talked over the Deritend business, in a dozen different forms.

The Deritend House was kept by the Greggs. Precisely who all the Greggs were, I do not suppose Aunt Lois knew before she went there. But she knew some of them. For Mrs. Gregg, a tired, pale-looking woman, and Clara Gregg and Fanny Gregg, two tall and very handsome girls, came regularly to church with a little Gregg boy; and one or all of these ladies often came to the Sewing Society, though not regularly. None of them came to the Temperance Union, as how should they, when Mr. Gregg kept the Deritend House? Then there were two or three young men, whom you saw about the house, and sometimes saw driving the Gregg girls out. Indeed, at any very large party, the Gregg girls would generally bring one of these brothers. But, though I knew all these young men, — and probably every undergraduate in college did, — Aunt Lois did not know them apart, nor even knew how many they were, or whether they were Greggs, or were brothers, or cousins, or clerks, or what; nor till to-day had she cared. Besides all these Greggs, there was Mr. Charles Gregg, whose name was on the top of the hotel register, — rather a showy, fussy, incompetent-looking sort of man, who had probably followed the old law of American social life, and "kept tavern" because there was nothing else that he

could do. This theory, long since abandoned in great centres, lingers in some such country towns as ours.

Aunt Lois's committee was not a bad one. For talking power, I think it relied upon her; nor was this a bad reliance. They had met punctually at eleven, and had called in force, all five of them, at the Deritend. They had asked first for the ladies; and in a moment poor Mrs. Gregg, a good deal frightened, came in to them. She was all ready, too. In a few more minutes Clara and Fanny had come in, — nervous, but courteous, and evidently determined to make things pass off as well as they might. Mrs. Gregg explained that her husband was away from home. The truth was, he had fled, as he always did, from any responsibility. But she said Horace and Frank were at home, and that it would be better for the ladies to see them than to see her husband; so if Aunt Lois pleased, she would send for them. Aunt Lois did please, and Clara went for the young men. She did not return; and as soon as Fanny got a chance, she slipped away also.

Well, Aunt Lois had made up her mind to do this thing, and she did it. "You know what we have come for, Mr. Gregg," said she, after the introductions. "We really want to persuade all the saloon-keepers, and all the public-house-keepers, to give up selling liquors, and we do not choose to begin with those little Irish holes. We want to begin with you, or, rather, we want to persuade you

to begin. Your house is a respectable house, and we want your influence and example."

Pretty well done, Aunt Lois, with that grave young fellow looking you right in the eye, without once winking all the time!

He said, in reply, that he and his brother were very much obliged for the visit, as he was sure his mother and sisters were; that it was much better to speak face to face than it was behind people's backs: that it was not, however, the first time this proposal had been made to him and his brothers; and he begged Aunt Lois and the ladies to believe that they had considered it very seriously, so that his answer, though prompt, was in no sort unconsidered.

"I do not say that we should agree with you, madam, whether a traveller has or has not the right to expect to find a glass of beer, a bottle of sherry, or a glass of brandy, at a hotel. Nor do I ask you to argue that.

"Nor do I think we should agree on another question, — whether the chances for the temperance of any man in this town would not be better, if he came to drink such liquors as we sell at our bar than if he went to drink poisoned whisky at such holes as you speak of. I do not think we should agree about these questions, and so we will not open them.

"All I need say is, that I am sorry you are so tired of your neighbors that you want us to leave town. Simply this is what your kind proposal amounts to."

Aunt Lois was really shocked, — not hurt, but puzzled and shocked. She must have explained herself badly, and she began all over again. Everybody knew that the Deritend was much better kept than it had ever been kept, she said. Everybody spoke pleasantly of Mr. Gregg and all the Greggs. She was sure that people were sorry not to see them more. Certainly she had not meant to say anything so rude. If she had, Mr. Gregg must forget it, and must pardon her. But what she and her friends wanted was a temperance house. Nobody could keep such a house better than Mr. and Mrs. Gregg could, she was sure; and just what the Union hoped was, that they would undertake it.

Horace Gregg smiled gravely, the first time he had smiled in the whole business.

"Indeed, Mrs. Claridge, you have not been rude. I think you cannot be rude. If you had not explained yourself as well as you have, still I should have understood it all. But you do not remember that I and my brothers have gone over all this a thousand times. It is our business to go over it, — our first duty; and, indeed, we have done that duty. But it all amounts to this: You and the ladies of the Union, and all the nicer people in Bromwich, want to have the Deritend kept open. You want to have our coach at the station whenever a train comes in, day or night: some of you might be there, or some of your friends. You want to have our dining-hall ready any day of the year for guests, with servants

enough, and a proper bill of fare. For although you never come here yourselves, yet the fathers and mothers of the college boys come, and the college boys themselves must be seen to before they are admitted. At Commencement and Class Day, and whatever, you want to have those people provided for whom you do not care to invite to your own houses. And you want the Deritend open for this. All these are public purposes, which make it desirable for Bromwich to have a first-class hotel here. But when it comes to the compensation for rendering these services, — which you know are important, — why, you want us to give up the only source of revenue which the Deritend House can rely upon. There is one perfectly regular source of income; but you ladies do not like the method by which it is attained. Very good. You have a right to your tastes and your opinion. Only, as I said, if you ask us to give up that source of income, you ask us to close this house, and to go to some other Bromwich, where people who take the sweet are willing to take the bitter."

It was a long speech; but Aunt Lois liked it; and she liked the dignity and frankness with which the young man spoke to her. She told him so, and then she went on: —

"But surely there are 'temperance houses,' Mr. Gregg. I am sure there are. There is one in Albany, I know. There is one in Syracuse: I saw the sign last month."

"You saw the sign, Mrs. Claridge, but you did not stop there; nor did Dr. Claridge. I think you never spent the night in a temperance hotel in your life, Mrs. Claridge. A temperance hotel is a house where, instead of a woollen carpet on the floor, there is a worn-out canvas; where, if you asked for a newspaper, they would tell you they take none; where your steak at breakfast would be such as Dr. Claridge never saw; where your coffee would be made out of beans ten times burned. Before the Deritend becomes such a house as that, Mrs. Claridge, my father will have ceased to be the landlord."

Now here, as Aunt Lois confessed, Mr. Horace Gregg carried too many guns for her; and, what is more, his guns were too heavy for her. She had, for many years, given up all use of wine or other liquors, because she found that by her abstinence she had much more effect with the college boys, with her servants, and with a hundred other people whom she would persuade to give up their wretched indulgences. There was no sham when she became president of the Temperance Union, though it was a total abstinence society; nor had the Doctor to alter, by a hair's breadth, the customs of his life or home, lest the most critical village gossip should charge him or Aunt Lois with inconsistency. But when Horace Gregg told her that she and the Doctor did not encourage temperance hotels in travelling, she knew he told the truth. And when he said that, while

the Union wanted to have the bar of the Deritend given up, she and all the members of the Union were using every day the conveniences which the Deritend supplied, she knew he spoke the truth again.

She was brave enough to acknowledge to Mr. Gregg that his shot had hit, and took advantage of her concession to enter right into the matter as a practical matter, from his point of view, and not from her own. The four other members of the Committee were probably surprised, but they had the wit to be silent. Mrs. Gregg was a lady, and had the sense to be silent too. So Horace Gregg and Aunt Lois had the talk all to themselves, with occasional assistance from Frank Gregg, when he saw a chance to put in a word.

But, after all, nothing came of it, she said. She had thought to press the Greggs by asking them whether, on their own ground, it was fair to make so large a profit as they did, in selling very dear what they bought very cheap? if it was fair to sell at ten cents a glass of liquor, which did not cost them one cent a gill? But Horace Gregg, in his grand way, had said that he need not explain to her that nothing would be gained by anybody if he undersold the market; that, if he sold liquor at five cents the glass, the Committee would not really be better pleased with the Deritend House than it was now. "Indeed, Mrs. Claridge," said he, "I think you will understand that precisely the pressure which is brought to bear on this business increases its profits, so

long as the business lasts. You have read Paley. You remember he says that ballet-dancers have to be paid the more highly, because the occupation they engage in is disreputable. It is just the same with bar-keepers. That is a law of society."

Once more Aunt Lois was a little surprised; this time to have Paley quoted to her in a tavern. But she was pleased in proportion; and, not to tell in its detail all that passed between her and the Greggs, the end of the Committee's visit was a long and sufficiently amicable talk, quite in detail sometimes, as to the ups and downs of such an establishment as the Deritend House. What part of the business paid, and what did not pay, Frank Gregg told openly. He even asked Aunt Lois, with a sort of simplicity which pleased her as much as Horace's gravity did, if she would not like to see how he kept the books and managed the wages accounts. This she declined. "But the upshot of it all is," said she, "that the liquor business is what supports that house. They make four thousand dollars a year clear profit out of it; and there would not be any Deritend House, if they did not get that four thousand dollars somewhere. Well, as Horace Gregg, said, they could move away. But somebody else would keep the house, who would keep a worse bar than they do, — if one bar can be worse than another, and I suppose it can." And, as Aunt Lois told us this, she really cried with vexation to think

that, being in the right, as she knew she was, — willing to make sacrifices too, as we all knew she was, — strong in a great purpose, and with no small share of the moral power of the community behind her, — she was none the less foiled in that purpose by miserable laws of trade, and by the strength of the tightly knitted web-work of human society.

The Greggs, if you only accepted their point of view, which she knew was wrong, had behaved perfectly all the way through. They had been courteous; they had even been sympathetic and confidential. And Horace Gregg, as the Committee came away, had said in so many words, "You ladies have hit the mark precisely, as you always do. If Bromwich wants us to give up our bar, we will gladly do what Bromwich wants, if only you will show us how to replace the income of four thousand dollars, which giving up the bar will cost us. And, indeed, as I think my brother said, Mrs. Claridge, we will make as large a sacrifice in that matter as anybody in town will."

With such courteous words — words not spoken in defiance, but words which seemed to close the business fatally — had the interview with the Committee ended.

"It seems to me," said my cousin Susie, after Aunt Lois had finally told the story to this critical end, on our pressing instances, "it seems to me that the thing we ought to do is this ——"

What it was, I do not know; nor does anybody else know.

For, if a bomb-shell had exploded under the library table, I think the little company of us would not have been more amazed than at that moment we were.

The door was opened by Martha, the servant-girl, and William Gadsden came in!

WILLIAM GADSDEN!

"Why should he not come in?" says the innocent reader. "Is not this a free country? May not a man ring any door-bell he pleases, and walk into any library or drawing-room he pleases? At the least, he can say he wants an autograph."

Dear reader, you do not know who William Gadsden was. William Gadsden had been a law student in the law-school at Bromwich. A wide-awake, intelligent, nay, a conscientious and religious man he seemed to be. He had come to our house a great deal when Dr. Claridge was the president of the college, because the college and law-school were all one, both being parts of the same paper University. All of us liked Will Gadsden. And he, — ah! did he not like Susie? and Susie, — ah! did not she like him? But — what a fatal but! — Will Gadsden would drink a little, a good deal, a great deal, as the girls say when they pull out the white leaves from a marguerite. And at last, — all this was two years before, — at last Will

Gadsden broke down — horribly and disgracefully! I myself, who write these words, had watched with him one night in Graduates' Hall, when he was crazy with delirium tremens, and when I thought he would not live until morning. Dr. Claridge had had to send one of the real saints of the college with him to his poor mother's house in Frederick. His father was dead long before. And dear Susie! Ah me! what had Susie suffered, or what had she not suffered? She never told me. And Aunt Lois never told me. And I do not know. Were they engaged before he went? Do not ask me. I do not know. All I know is, that after he went Susie seemed to me like what I imagine a vestal. She was in the world, but not of the world. She was at every picnic, at every party. She buttered bread for the children, if we went to Blannerhassett Island. She waltzed with the Freshmen, if there were a party at Madam Wassell's. She cut flannels with the notables, if there were a call for clothing for the 78th Regiment. She took her class of hobble-de-hoys — unfledged men, no longer boys — in the Sunday school. She was the life and fire and glory of the Exclamation Club, which united the nicest girls in Bromwich. Yes. But all the same, there was not boy or girl, man or woman of us, who would ever have hinted, after Will Gadsden went away, or was sent away in disgrace, that Susie Claridge had one thought of tenderness for any other man, or that it would be well for any

other man, though he were King of Hearts, to have one word of tenderness for her! The last time Will Gadsden was in this library, he was so drunk that he told Aunt Lois three times how he had locked himself out of his own room, and Bernard at last had to take him home and put him to bed. That was just before the awful time when the president sent him back to his mother.

And now nobody had heard the door-bell ring; and Martha, pale herself as death, had shown Mr. Gadsden into the room!

Dr. Claridge is a man of the world, though he was a college president. Aunt Lois is not a woman of the world: but she is what is better, a child of God, self-forgetting and self-sacrificing; and I never saw nor heard of the exigency that she is not fit for. What Susie is I have tried to tell. What Bernard is you will see. What I am is no matter. For all our varied experience, I confess that, when Will Gadsden came in, we were dashed as much as if Martha had fired off a bombshell under the table. A pause there was, but it lasted only for the least differential of a moment. I will not say that Susie was not the one who rallied first. But it was Aunt Lois who first rose. She half-crossed the room. She did not give Will her hand, nor did he offer his. But she took his hat, and she made him take a chair.

Thank Heaven, there are the stereotyped questions which we all could ask if we were at the stake: When did he come? By what line did he

come? Had he expected to come? Had he not been in Europe? We had seen his name in the list of passengers. When Aunt Lois said this, I knew she was getting her wind, as the ungodly say, and was coming up to time. For this was a delicate intimation that we had no means of knowing of his whereabouts but by the newspapers.

Will Gadsden answered every question quite fully, as if he knew that for all parties it was a good thing to gain time, if they meant to regain self-possession. He went quite carefully into his stay in Europe: how he took chambers at the New Inn, in London, and read law there: how he studied civil law in Heidelberg. No. He had not gone as far as Italy. He had put that off till another time. This time he went for work, and for nothing else. Yes, he had seen Gansevoort and Melvin in Heidelberg. He thought they would stay a year longer. He wondered they did not write to old friends.

Really Will Gadsden spun out Europe very well. And Aunt Lois, who was always mollified a great while before she ought to be, began to feel quite at ease with him, and asked at last how he left his mother and sister. And here was the place where the talk ceased to be fencing, and both parties dropped their guard.

"I ought to have said, first of all, that mother sends her very best love to you, — to all of you." He did not trust himself, even now, to look at Susie. "Mother and I and the little ones have

been at Bath all the summer. You know it is a droll old-fashioned Virginia watering-place, where they have tournaments and no end of nonsense. Either the waters did her good, or, as I believe, having no housekeeping did her good. Anyway, she is stronger and better than I have seen her for ten years. I have just got them well home; and it is she who has given me courage to show myself here. Indeed, she sent me here. And what I came here to-night for was to give her love, and all her other messages to you — and to Miss Susie." This time he did not say and "to all of you." But he did not look at Susie, and his face was as white as death as he spoke.

Dear Aunt Lois! she is always ten times too forgiving. She said what she never should have said, without asking the Doctor's advice: —

"I am so glad you came! It seems like old times to see you; and do you mean to stay?"

Will Gadsden was already standing, as if to take his leave, though the call had not lasted ten minutes. So unlike the times when he spent half a day at that house on occasions! "Oh, yes! I am going to finish the Law course here, and take my degree, if I can pass your examinations." This with a smile, as if Bromwich examinations were not much to be dreaded after those of Heidelberg. "I was only in the law-school here five months, all told, before. And then," after the least possible pause, "I lost my character here, and it is here that it must be regained, if it is regained at all."

And then the brave fellow smiled, with an exquisite smile of hope and of resolution, which might have been the smile of the archangel Abdiel!

I believe it was that smile which made the Doctor come to the front, — Dr. Claridge, I mean. He had been very pusillanimous before, as most men are, when there are women at hand, in occasions of trial; and he had left Aunt Lois to take the brunt of the action. But he was so pleased with Gadsden's firmness that he said now with real cordiality, "Have you taken your room?"

"Why, no, — or rather yes," said Will, a little gravely. "I wrote to the Steward to ask for my old room, or anything else in the dear old den. But the Steward says he has nothing vacant. You are growing quite too popular, Doctor Claridge, with all your University improvements, unless you build us some new dormitories. So I have agreed this afternoon with Horace Gregg to let me have one of his dormer-window attics on Bow Street, in the west wing of the Deritend. I expect my books by the freight train of to-night, and to-morrow I shall go to work putting up my shelves, and getting ready for business." And so the proud young fellow bowed and withdrew. Neither Dr. Claridge nor Aunt Lois, and of course not I, had asked him if he would not call again. Far less had Susie!

But Bernard put on his hat, when Will went away, and walked down the street with him. And when Will bade him good-by at the door of the

Deritend, Bernard said he had a call to make there, and he went in too.

CHAPTER II

THE DERITEND ATTIC

AUNT LOIS had certainly not intended to make a second visit at the Deritend within twenty-four hours. But man proposes, and God disposes. As soon as breakfast was over the next morning, Aunt Lois girded herself for a walk, — a most unusual thing for her at the time when housekeepers generally "step round" at home, — and she walked down the hill. Where she was going she had told no one, unless it were her husband; certainly she did not tell the girls nor me.

But it was to the Deritend that she directed her way, and this time as eagerly as yesterday unwillingly.

She asked for Mr. Gadsden, and said they need not call him downstairs, but that she would see him in his room. She climbed the four flights of stairs, — monuments of long-past prosperity, — passed through the dark and dusty and snuffy entries, knocked at No. 73, and was admitted by Will's ready "Come in!" And this time it was he who was amazed by an unexpected arrival.

Will was sitting on a trunk in the middle of the room, shaping with his jack-knife a wedge which

was to play some fundamental part in the support of the book-shelves, which leaned, in a paralytic angle, against the wall. The floor was littered with his chips, with the newspapers that had packed his books, and with straw from his other packing-cases. The whole apartment was the very concrete embodiment of confusion worse confounded. There were three or four cane chairs stacked together in one corner; there was a rough roll of carpet in another, with two or three dirty window-shades which had been tumbled over it. The bed was not yet made up for the day; and a dressing-gown of Gadsden's, a pair of pantaloons, and other apparel, lay upon it. He started to his feet, — half-laughing and half-dismayed, — offered his hand to Aunt Lois, who did not refuse it, and then with wild and futile gestures he tried to dust out a chair for her to sit in.

"It is ever so good in you to climb up here. But why did not you send up for me?"

Aunt Lois got her breath by degrees. She was half-crying and half-laughing.

"You may charge as much as you please to the account of curiosity," said she. "I did want to see what sort of a burrow you had found. For a burrow, it is near enough to the sky." Then she stopped, and pretended she had not recovered her breath! Ah me! to think that even Aunt Lois made believe sometimes!

"No, Mr. Gadsden, that was not what I came for really. Really I came to say that I cannot

bear to have you living in this house! There, that is frank; and you like frankness."

The great tears came to Will Gadsden's eyes. "Mrs. Claridge, if there is a saint this side heaven, that saint is you!"

"Fiddlestick for saints!" said Aunt Lois. "I am the mother of two boys and of four girls, Mr. Gadsden; and, though I have never seen your mother, I know how to feel for a mother like your mother, who has only one daughter and one son." Here she dropped her voice a little, but she looked him in the eye more steadily than ever; and she went on: "I know I should be wretched if a son of mine took rooms in a drinking-house like this, Mr. Gadsden! That is the reason why I want you to come away."

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Claridge! thank you ten thousand times over for saying it; nay, for caring enough for me to come and say it. Thank you, and thank you again and again. If you say so, when you have heard me through, I will leave my airy 'burrow;'" and he laughed. "Nay, if you say so, when you have heard me through, I will leave Bromwich; and I will open my office in Columbus to-morrow, as I can do, for I can enter at the bar at any moment I choose. But I think what I said last night holds water. In Bromwich I lost my character, and in Bromwich I will regain it. Carry that statement a little farther, dear Mrs. Claridge: in the Deritend House I lost it, and in the Deritend I mean to find it."

She wanted to speak, but he would not let her. "Pardon me one moment more," said he. "You think I am over-straining a set of new-formed resolutions. Let me tell you first what I am, and what I know I can do. My dear mother took me home, when Ned Morrill brought me back to Frederick from here, — well, as only a man's mother can, Mrs. Claridge! She nursed me, — you know how she nursed me. She sent for Longcross, — he 's our doctor, — the noblest and the wisest and the truest old brick that ever lived. And he nursed me, too, and he fed me, and he counselled me — yes, he ordered me. If it were not for him, Aunt Lois, — I beg your pardon, but you know you used to let me say so, — if it were not for him, Mrs. Claridge, I should not be here to-day. Well, dear Mrs. Claridge, I did what he bade me. I should as soon have deceived an archangel, and as soon disobeyed one. He sent me to London, and told me what to do there; he advised me to go to Heidelberg, and told me how to do it, and what to do there. What he bade me do I have done. And, first of all, and last of all, now for two years and three months I have neither tasted nor touched any sort of liquor, — not beer in Heidelberg, not sherry in London. I do not say I have never been tempted; but I do say I have met the temptation. And, at least, you know that I tell you the truth."

She wanted to speak; but again he would not let her.

"One moment more. I have such reason for thinking that I can hold to a resolution which involves life or death for me. I know that as well as you do, — better. And I know one thing more, which you may not have thought of.

"Unless I am trying to help some one else out of this pit, I shall certainly fall in again myself.

"That is the eternal law. If I am brooding about my own failure or my own success, I shall certainly go to the bad, Mrs. Claridge. The doctor told me that, and, if he had not told me, I should have found it out before I had been in London a fortnight.

"Knowing this, I knew that if I came to Bromwich I must find somebody somewhere whom I could help from something, or that I was gone.

"And so when Mr. Dumesnil wrote me that there was no room for me in the old den, it flashed across me that there would be room here. And I thought this, Aunt Lois, — do not think me too bold for thinking it: I thought if I am here at dinner and at supper, every day, you know, — in and out, you know, as a man must be, who has his room here, — I thought I should have a chance to say something, maybe to do something, for the boys who loaf in here, just as I used to do; such as no other man could well have, — anyway, I thought I would try."

His face blazed with animation; and now he stopped, and waited her answer.

But it was a minute before she spoke. "My

dear boy," she said then, "I dare not say I do not know; but, if I had spoken at the first minute, I believe I should have said, God in his mercy sent you. Mr. Gadsden, what do you suppose was the last visit I made yesterday, — before you saw me at our house? Of course you cannot guess. It was a visit on Horace and Frank Gregg, in the ladies' drawing-room downstairs. I had come to ask them to give up the bar at this house."

"No!" cried he, surprised in his turn. "And what did they say?"

"They said that to ask them to do that was to ask them to remove their mother and their sisters out of town. They said that, if there was to be a hotel here, it needed so many servants, and so much fuel, and so large a meat-bill, and so on, — in dollars and cents. They said that the bar alone made a clear and sure profit on the investment made, and that without that profit the house must be closed. They not only said this, Mr. Gadsden, but they proved it."

"I suppose they did. I suppose they did,' said Will Gadsden, slowly. "Do you know I have thought more and more, these six months, that we must begin at the other end."

"Unless we begin at both ends," said Aunt Lois, after another long pause.

"Unless we begin at both ends!" repeated he, cheerfully and thoughtfully.

"And now," continued Aunt Lois, "I will not say one word more about what brought me here.

I came to beg you, by all that was holy, by your mother's love, by your memory of your father, and by all your hopes for your own life, — I came to beg you to leave this house, this day and this hour. I was going to tell you where you could go, — that you could have one of Mrs. Fordyce's rooms, a thousand times better than this, of course, in every way. I was going to say — well, Mr. Gadsden, I was going to say that, if you could not pay Mrs. Fordyce's rates, I could and I would." And the tears stood in Aunt Lois's eyes. "And now see what a weathercock I am! I am like the Abbot in the 'Lord of the Isles.' I go away begging you to stay, — if only you are wholly sure, to stay and to conquer. May God himself be with you, and be your strength." Here she broke down, crying. Nor was Gadsden much firmer.

"Only, my dear child," said she, "you must not stay in such a Dom-Daniel as this. I must have Margaret Flynn here to put down this carpet, and John David to put up these curtains, and Mrs. Gregg must send up somebody to wash these windows, and these detestable fly-papers must come down."

"O dear Mrs. Claridge, do leave something for the rest of the world to do. I shall have order made out of chaos one day here, and you shall come and see my miracles."

"Well, at least, you will come and dine with us to-day!"

The young man's face fired crimson. "Not to-day! No! not for many, many days, Mrs. Claridge. Remember what I am doing, and what I have to do. Let us begin at the beginning!"

CHAPTER III

TO BEGIN AT BOTH ENDS

THAT afternoon the general committee met in the ladies' parlor of the Methodist Church, to hear the report of their sub-committee. No fag-end meeting was this, — attended only by the elect, who had nothing else to do, — but well-nigh every woman was there who had any right to be there, and some, I should say, who had no right. "Important meeting," it said on the card: true enough; but the women went, not only because it was important, but because they were curious to know what had happened.

At such meetings there is generally great pretence of parliamentary order, with an utter defiance, from sheer ignorance, of parliamentary rules: many motions are made, back and forth, which are never regularly put to vote; and then, out of a chaos which would drive Cushing or Bentham or Jefferson or Romilly crazy, there comes a "sense of the meeting," as clear and as well formulated as ever was drawn up by a Quaker clerk. This remark will displease Mrs.

Howe. Still, I commend it to her serious reflection. "Paradoxical as it is, it is nevertheless true."

The full committee meeting at the Methodist church was no exception to the rule. When Aunt Lois wanted silence, that they might hear Miss Ann Haldemand's report, they all broke up in groups, and talked in groups. When, on the other hand, she asked the different sub-committees to separate and put on paper the heads of their recommendations, everybody sat still in her seat; and Mrs. Featherstone made a very interesting statement about what she had noticed in the vine-growing regions of Central France. All the same, being "clear sheer determined," or, as the vernacular says, "sot" in their plans, the committee advanced through its afternoon business, though by ways it had not known. The sub-committees, sooner or later, brought in their reports. Aunt Lois told what I have told you about the Deritend. The others told about the Eagle, the Northern, and what Flynn said, and what Mrs. Schumann said; and how they could not get in at the saloon by the canal lock; and how they believed the people had moved away from the shop below Bailey's, — at least the curtains were down, and nobody seemed to know anything.

There had not been much gained in any of the interviews. George Readhead, at the Northern, had said he would give up his bar if all the rest

would. But even Mrs. Morris, who reported this, saw that it meant nothing. For the rest, the different dealers had been civil enough; but some had been defiant, some had been silent, and nobody had made any concession. The ladies were disposed at first to fall back on the satisfaction of thinking and saying that nobody had expected anything from this appeal. But if any motion would have been made or not, I do not know; for, in connection with the bar at the Northern, Mrs. Oelrich fell to telling of the "wretched times" she had had the last week with Corkery, their "man of all work," — that same bright fellow whom everybody remembered; who, indeed, drove in the carry-all last week when she came to the meeting.

Mrs. Oelrich was Gustav Oelrich's wife. He is the great leather man out at Faff's Mills. They have a beautiful place there, — greenhouse and carefully kept garden; and they have so many guests of their own, that they might be quite independent of our Bromwich society. But Gustav Oelrich is a public-spirited man, who does not shirk his share of the public duties of the borough. They always come into church, and stay to both services. And Mrs. Oelrich, who is an American, and not a German, takes more pains than you might think to keep up social relations, not only with the college people, but with all the village. She is at the Sewing Circle, at the Shakespeare Club, subscribes to

the Reading Club, and, in short, insists on being counted in in all our village plans and sociabilities. So she is a general favorite with us; and her good sense and real generosity help things very vigorously along.

Corkery, on whom the conversation diverged, after the report on the bar at the Northern, was what in another social order would be called a "coachman." Nobody called him a coachman at Faff's Mills, — perhaps because there was not a coach within three miles. He had the oversight of the stable, he took Mrs. Oelrich's orders into town every day for her purchases, and brought out the mail; he was responsible for all the hay and corn and oats, and such things; he would have done anything in the garden that Miss Bertha asked him to; and if he had been told to take the boys chestnutting, he would have gone, with entire satisfaction to all persons concerned. So that in the village we should have said he was the Oelrichs' "man," — that is what we should have called him. Not but Gustav Oelrich hired a hundred other "men," and paid them every Saturday night. For all that, they were his "hands," his "help," his "operatives," or what you please. Corkery was the Oelrichs' "man."

And Corkery was well-nigh faultless in his vocation. Gustav Oelrich used to say that he would double his wages, and settle them on him for life, if — if only he would agree to have his semi-annual "sprees" at fixed times; would give

notice three days beforehand; have the spree and be done with it, and come back to duty after it was over. It was the lawless and wholly incalculable moment of the spree that drove Gustav Oelrich to despair. Corkery drove the girls into town one winter night to a ball; and when twelve o'clock came, and the last dancer had gone, eight inches of snow on the ground, and more falling, there was no Corkery and no carriage. Walter Wiltse had to find his father's carriage and drive them home himself, — with his "white kid gloves on," Oelrich always said; but this was an exaggeration. And now Corkery had pulled the string of his shower-bath for the last time. The day he brought Mrs. Oelrich in to the last meeting had been his last day. That morning he had asked that the two Shepherd boys who worked in the stable might go to Oneida County, because their father was dead, and he had got permission. He and the gardener were to take care of the horses. That night, by way of strengthening himself for these extra duties, he had gone down to the Northern: had been seen there by some of the tannery people; and that was the last of Corkery. Nobody to see to the horses but John, who did not know Redjacket's harness from Kate's, and who had already had his foot trodden on by Redjacket, so that he could hardly stand. Mr. Oelrich was very angry; he had told Corkery that he would never take him back again if he had another spree, and he never would. Bertha

Oelrich had driven in the bays that afternoon. "I was afraid for my life," Mrs. Oelrich said; "but I thought I had one report to bring, if nobody else had any. So I made my will and came; and here we are. How we are to get home, I am sure I do not know."

At this moment Mrs. Oelrich was called out, and Bertha took up the wondrous tale of Corkery, and what they did without him, — all the ladies of her mother's age and standing drawing their chairs as closely up as they could to listen; and a very funny story Bertha made of it in her bright way.

Mrs. Oelrich returned, — all amazement. Had she been laughing or crying? She was laughing now, but you could not tell. "Well," said she, "you may talk of an angel, and you hear the flap of his wings! Who do you think called me out? Who, to be sure, but John Corkery himself! or a very gentlemanly looking person who brought him. This gentleman said that Corkery wanted to come to ask my pardon, and Mr. Oelrich's; and sure enough there, in the boys' library, was my man, waiting for me."

It was even so. John Corkery had pulled through his spree. He had been ashamed to go near Gustav Oelrich's house. He had not a cent of money. He had not so much as a coat to his back, for he had pawned the very coat he wore with a worthless broker we had then in Bromwich. Freezing, starving, ashamed beyond words,

hating liquor, hating himself, hating life, he had fallen in with a man named George Ruther, the "gentlemanly-looking person," who had brought him to Mrs. Oelrich. Corkery had known perfectly well that he could never go back to his service there. But Mr. Ruther said that the apology was his own notion, that he said he had disgraced himself more by misusing Mrs. Oelrich's confidence in him than in any other way, and that he must tell her how much ashamed he was, and how sorry he was. And so Mr. Ruther had brought him. John Corkery had been affected to tears, and you may be sure Mrs. Oelrich had. He had begged her pardon; asked her to ask the young ladies to forgive him, and had said he knew Mr. Oelrich never would, or he would go and see him.

What was he going to do?

"I am sure I don't know, ma'am. But Mr. Ruther here, and the rest of them, think they can take care of me. Good-by, ma'am. Would you give this, with John's love, to Master Arthur for me? The little fellow liked to have it to play with sometimes." And he pulled out a gentleman's pocket-knife, which Mrs. Oelrich knew was the joy of his life. It was given him by Colonel Eden of the English sixty-second, when Corkery was his servant in India. And so he hurried away.

"How did he look, mamma?" said Bertha, half-crying too; for Mrs. Oelrich was very much affected as she told the story.

"Look! Oh, he looked as if he had had a fit of sickness. But he was neat, smoothly shaven, and well-dressed. He has fallen among friends. Who is this Mr. Ruther?" And she turned to Mrs. Etter, who knows everybody and everything in the village.

But even Mrs. Etter was somewhat at fault here. She thought, however, that he must be one of the new people who had come in with the railroad; and, if he were the man she thought he was, he had a part of a house on one of the new streets, — Worth Street, as you crossed the canal. Her husband would know, and she would ask him.

"What did he mean, mamma, when he said that 'we' would take care of John? Who are 'we'?" This was Bertha's question to Mrs. Oelrich.

Mrs. Oelrich had meant to ask him. But Mr. Ruther had turned away from the interview between her and John, as if he had no right there.

"It seems to me," said Aunt Lois, "that if we could find out who 'we' are, and what 'we' do mean to do about this poor fellow, we should get back to the business of the day. I believe it is providential, the whole of it, Mrs. Oelrich! To think of their coming here just when you were telling the story!"

And thus it was the way that it happened, that, when, half an hour after, one of the younger girls of the society, who was sitting in a group at the

window, announced that Jane Ruther and her brother had stopped at Clark and Vandewall's, and that Jane was holding the horse while her brother went into the store, Aunt Lois asked Mrs. Oelrich whether she thought it would do to ask him in for a few minutes to talk with them. Mrs. Oelrich was sure it would do, and in a moment found her hat and shawl, and with Mrs. Etter ran across the street to give the impromptu invitation. In a minute more they appeared with their captive, and with Jane Ruther, — whom the younger girls welcomed as a school-mate.

George Ruther was, indeed, a gentlemanly-looking man; and in this rather trying introduction he bore himself very well. Of course everybody laughed and made fun of the invitation, that the ladies could not get on without at least one gentleman, and all that. Of course, he was introduced to I know not how many heads of committees. Aunt Lois rather gravely apologized for the liberty they had taken, said they would not detain him; got his hat and whip away from him, and made him sit down. Then she told him very briefly what they wanted.

"Mrs. Oelrich says that some friends of yours have got hold of this poor John of hers and mean to take care of him. Pray how do you go to work with such a man? how ought I to go to work with such a man? and if you have any hope of succeeding with him, on what is that hope founded?"

Bertha Oelrich whispered to her mother, and Mrs. Oelrich followed up Aunt Lois's little speech by saying, "You said *we* were going to take care of him, Mr. Ruther. Who are 'we'?"

Mr. Ruther almost blushed. He looked very handsome, he was so animated; yet he found it somewhat hard to answer so many questions. He began with the last.

"Oh! 'we' are a little knot of friends, not a club exactly, but a sort of club; and one of us fell in with this poor fellow that night, when I believe he might have drowned himself, if Lewis had not taken him home. Lewis is the flag-man at the Ulster crossing. As Lewis went home at midnight, after the night express passed, he stumbled on poor Corkery dead drunk by the roadside. I hope you never saw such a brute, Mrs. Claridge. Lewis could not lift him, but found Moore, and they two carried him home to Lewis's tenement. Mrs. Lewis made up a bed for him, and they got his boots off, and put him to bed. The next day Lewis came round to me, and since that we have been trying to take care of him."

"'We,' again," said Aunt Lois, smiling: "do you mean that it is the business of your club to take care of drunken men?"

"Oh, not at all, except as it is everybody's business, — yours, and Mr. Gregg's, for instance, at the Deritend. If it really interests you," he said, after a moment's hesitation, "the club, as

you call it, is a society which, — well, we are all working-men, who find we cannot do all alone quite what we want to do, so we have this little compact, that we will help each other in such things, and that perhaps was the reason Mr. Lewis and Mr. Moore came to me."

"What do you call the society?"

Again he hesitated a moment; but then said simply: "It is called the 'Wadsworth Brothers.'"

Bertha Oelrich turned full on him: "Are you the men that have the four mottoes?"

"We are a few of them," said he; and he smiled.

Bertha Oelrich had forgotten herself. But she was always impulsive. She took from a chain a gold locket she wore, snapped the case open, and held it out to Mr. Ruther that he might read; and then passed it to the other ladies. On the two open faces of the gold was engraved, —

"Look up, and not down;
Look out, and not in."

"Those are two of the Wadsworth mottoes, Mrs. Etter. The other two are on the other side, —

"'Look forward, and not back;'

And, —

"'Lend a hand.'"

"It seems to have been the last motto that served our friend Corkery," said Aunt Lois, gravely. "Pray tell us how, Mr. Ruther," — as if she would call back the meeting to its business.

He said there was not much to tell. It was a day or two before Corkery could talk very coherently. He did not want to go out, and Mrs. Lewis had easily kept him in bed all the time. She felt a good deal relieved when, one morning, he seemed to have a little appetite, and drank off a bowl of broth she brought him. Then nothing would do but he must leave town. He would go to Pittsburg; he would walk there. There was a recruiting station at Pittsburg, and he would enlist. He could never show his face again where Mrs. Oelrich could see him. But Ruther himself, and others of the Wadsworth men, got hold of him. They told him that this was unmanly; that he must stay here till people saw there was something of him; that he was too good a soldier to desert because things did not look well. "We have talked a good deal about it," said Mr. Ruther, finally; "and we have determined to put him in charge of a little enterprise of ours, down at the shop on Front Street, below Bailey's. Probably none of you ladies know the place. It is a drinking-house, and the keeper was sent to the House of Correction last week for stealing a horse. The place is empty, and we are going to fit it up for a sort of reading-room and library, — well, smoking-room and place of general comfort for the poor fellows there whose wives cannot make comfortable homes for them. We shall let them have their pipes, Mrs. Claridge. We are going to have coffee and tea for them, — perhaps something more. Only one thing they

shall not have; and that is bad whisky!" This he said with a flash of anger, which Aunt Lois said seemed almost like Satan!

Mrs. Oelrich said, "like Michael." But this was afterwards.

"And do you really dare to put this broken-down drunkard, who may go on another spree any day, in charge of your enterprise?"

"As to that," said George Ruther, "we must put somebody in charge. But, to tell you the truth, it is John Corkery really who starts the enterprise, or for whom we start it. You can do nothing for such a man unless you give him something to do. Nay, he cannot 'reform himself,' as people call it, unless he engages 'in reforming' others. Nothing is so sure as that he will be drinking again in six months, unless he be at work, and hard at work, to save other people from drinking. Whenever he has the holy horror of a bar-room that — that you ladies have, or that I have, and for the same reason, there is no fear that he will go into one again. That is a long story; but that is really our notion about opening the reading-room. We planned it last winter; but we had never found that things were quite ripe. Just now they seemed ripe. This wretched Sullivan stole the horse, and was sent to jail; so his shop is all ready for us, — just where we wanted our place. But we had no man to keep it. Just then poor John Corkery loses his employment with your husband, madam, and falls in our way; and so we find our man."

"The ladies will please come to order," said Aunt Lois, tapping vigorously with her thimble. "The ladies will come to order! The ladies will be glad to hear that Mr. Ruther reports that one liquor-shop in the village is closed already. The shop below Bailey's, where Mrs. Briscomb and Miss Helen were not able to enter, is to be purified and consecrated, and opened as a reading-room for working-men, without whisky, by the Wadsworth Brothers."

Quite a little round of applause and congratulation followed this speech, in the midst of which Mr. Ruther recovered his hat and whip, called his sister Jane, and bade the heads of committees good-by. "Please say nothing about the Wadsworth Brothers," said he. "It is no secret, but we do not care to be in print." Then, rather louder: "When our reading-room is open, if the ladies walk that way, I hope they will look in. It is for working-women as well as for working-men; and I see you all work while you carry on your discussions." So Mr. George Ruther bowed himself out of the room.

Great buzzing followed, and now the women were talking in earnest, and had something very real to say. "That man has got hold of something," said Mrs. Oelrich, "and you saw his face. He and the people behind him will hold on. How much finer this is than making speeches!"

"But we must have the speeches, too, mamma," said Bertha Oelrich, perhaps a little too abruptly.

"He has got hold of something perfectly definite. He knows what he is about, and these people behind him know what they are about. He will have in twelve months' time a set of work-people meeting there at his smoking-room who will set the fashion to all the boys, and will give the tone to all the neighborhood, just as that dirty Flynn's saloon now sets the fashion and gives the tone. I made Bertha drive round by your house, Mrs. Etter, just that I might not see Flynn's house. I cannot bear it. And my poor John Corkery is to be the agent in it all! What will Mr. Oelrich say?"

If they had asked me what Mr. Oelrich would say, I could have told them that he would contribute fifty dollars towards the charges of the reading-room, and would never tell anybody a word of what he had done.

But I was not there, and report this only from Susie's and Aunt Lois's narratives.

"There are forty grog-shops in town," exclaimed little Mrs. Briscomb; "but I am afraid the town will not support forty reading-rooms," she added, with a dolorous groan that made everybody laugh.

Mrs. Oelrich said, half-aside, that she did not dare propose ten, but she should be sorry to think that the work-people at the railroad were going to have all the reading. "It seems as if, thanks to Mr. Ruther, they would have one convenience that nobody else in town has.

"Mrs. Claridge," she added in a moment, "these

gentlemen have begun at the bottom. Might it not be possible

TO BEGIN AT BOTH ENDS" ?

But even Aunt Lois did not answer. For the clock had struck for half-past five, and this was not a tea-meeting. The ladies were putting up their work, paying their fines and assessments, and even Aunt Lois was *distraite*.

But as Mrs. Oelrich left, Aunt Lois said to her, "Could not you come in to tea to-morrow evening, and bring Miss Bertha. We can talk there."

As if they had not talked here!

CHAPTER IV

AT THE TOP

"WE shall have to make the men help us."

"The men and the boys, the old women and the babies, everybody must help. It is a social revolution."

"What would you call it?"

"That is a hard question, and a very important one."

"You might say the Woman's Club."

"Oh, not in the least! — do not drop a word of that. If it is not a man's club quite as much as it is a woman's club, it will never do at all. And the men must think they originate it all. Do not

give an idea, dear Bertha, that it is a woman's club."

Bertha laughed very heartily, and said she would never use those words again. It might be the Centaur's Club, for all her. But she did not think it would amount to much without Aunt Lois and Mrs. Oelrich.

For all these outbursts came in, in the middle of the "talk," when Aunt Lois had the ladies to tea, so that there might be a chance to talk, which, as she said, was well-nigh impossible in the general committee.

"When I was in England last year," said Mrs. Oelrich, "we were at Oxford, and we stayed there at the Clarendon Hotel. Gustav wanted to see the London 'Spectator,' and he asked Mrs. What 's-her-name, the landlady, if they had it in the house. 'Oh, certainly, — it was in the club-room: would he come in.'

"I believe she had no right to let him in, but perhaps she knew there was nobody else there.

"Gustav was so pleased that he called me in. There was, on the ground floor, this nice large parlor, as pretty a room as you need see; there was an open fire, real comfortable arm-chairs, and all the newspapers, and all the magazines. My dear, it was a man's club-room, and a very small one at that. But it was the first I was ever in, and for that matter the last.

"I remember Gustav groaned as he came away. 'That is the reason,' he said, 'why men like to

live in large towns and cities, and do not like to make leather at Faff's Mills!'

"And just think of it, Mrs. Claridge! What do we live for but to have our lives a little bit bigger this month than they were last month, — to find a wider outlook somewhere? Unless we do that, I do not see that life is worth living for!

"Now, just suppose that the Greggs would let us have those two south parlors at the Deritend, which are now simply hideous. I went there last summer, and took Mrs. Clarke out to our house as soon as she could lock her trunk."

"For which, doubtless, the landlord thanked you," said Dr. Claridge, laughing.

"I did not think of the landlord: I thought of her, sweet soul, and her children!

"Just imagine, I say, a cheerful fire in a gigantic Franklin in each of those fireplaces; imagine a cheerful, very warm Brussels on the floor, — something such a carpet as this, Doctor; imagine a dozen or two new novels, and all the new monthlies and weeklies. Imagine me, arrived in town with the bays, and waiting for my husband to come out from some wretched directors' meeting. Suppose for a wonder that I do not choose to come in and bore you or Mrs. Ellery or Mrs. Etter, while I wait for him. Suppose I had rather not talk than talk. Suppose I should go in to this pretty club-room, sit in an easy-chair before the fire, and ring the bell, and tell the girl to bring me a cup of tea. Don't you think I would pay

ten dollars a year for the chance to do that thing?"

"I suppose you would," said Dr. Claridge; "but whether one hundred and ninety-nine other ladies would in this neighborhood, I am not sure."

"Nor am I," said the pertinacious lady, not used to giving up her points. "I am quite sure there are not so many women who would ask their husbands for ten dollars to make them perfectly comfortable. But I know one man who would pay; and that is the Rev. Amos Claridge, S. T. D., late President of Barrow College, and Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy. He would be 'mighty glad' to see the 'Quarterly,' and the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' and some of the naughty papers that it does not do for him to subscribe for. Nay, he would not be very sorry to look in just before tea some evening, and find Mrs. Katherine Oelrich, or some other equally agreeable lady sitting there, waiting for her husband to take her home."

The Doctor had to laugh at this appeal, and he owned that she had two subscribers already.

"Bertha will tell you," said the impetuous woman, "that it only needs ten subscribers, through and through in earnest, — *thorough*, as my dear, hateful Lord Strafford says, — to do anything. Indeed, I believe Abraham found that out long ago, did he not? Doctor, I always come to you for my theology. If ten of us are in earnest, we shall put it through."

Aunt Lois believed in the plan from the beginning. She believed in it all the more from what had passed in the attic of the Deritend between her and poor Gadsden. Both the women had slept on what that clear-headed Ruther had said, and a plan not unlike Mrs. Oelrich's had formed itself among us at the Doctor's even before she came in. More quiet than Mrs. Oelrich, still she said all this very distinctly.

"You see," said that lady, "nothing really great ever fails, — nothing that rests on a principle, as Gustav says. Now this plan does rest on a principle. It rest on this principle, which will work a revolution in society," and she laughed again at her own eagerness.

"The principle is this: that whereas men, when they meet in clubs alone, take to drinking and smoking, and at best play whist or billiards, and at worst play poker or rouge et noir, they would have a thousand times nicer times, and would neither drink nor steal, if they had women with them.

"Do not interrupt me, my dear Doctor! Let me confess that the principle may be stated exclusively thus: that whereas women, when they meet in companies alone, turn back badly on their own lives, and discuss the difficulties of the household and nursery, — as, poor souls, why should they not, seeing they are so much more alone, or away from people of their own age, than men? — when they are with men, they are at their best, talk

their best, act their best, teach and learn, and of course enjoy, as they never do and never can in feminine coteries.

"Why, it is no shame to the boys in the college, that, if they knew a hundred nice Bromwich girls had joined in this Clarendon Club of mine, a hundred of them would join it the next day.

"And it is no shame to the girls in Bromwich, that, if they heard that a hundred of the boys in the college had joined it, a hundred of them would join the next day — *if they dared.* Perhaps they will not dare; but with as good a cause as ours behind, Doctor, I believe they will!"

In such fashion the impetuous Mrs. Oelrich went on with her plan, born out of George Ruther's reading-room, for taking the Deritend captive. She had thoroughly digested Aunt Lois's report of the day before: "If we wanted to break up the Deritend bar, we must supply an income of four thousand dollars to the Deritend every year." George Ruther had given her the hint. Here were three hundred women in the Temperance Union. Here were the outlying manufacturers, who would pay a good deal for comfort in Bromwich, even if they would do nothing for temperance. Here were the college students. She had always remembered that cheerful Clarendon Club at Oxford; and she could not help wishing that that, or something better, might be possible at Bromwich.

Her plan was made, to the least corner, when she came in to Aunt Lois's to tea.

She would form a club of gentlemen and ladies, to open club-rooms at the Deritend.

There should be dressing-rooms for the ladies, and a smoking-room for the gentlemen. There should be a reading-room where people might not talk, and a parlor with a piano where they might talk as much as they chose.

"Even if you were playing the Funeral March on the death of a hero," my dear Susie.

There should be honorary members, active members, and silent members. The honorary members should pay $20 a year, or $200 once for all. The active members should pay $10 a year; they should vote, choose officers, and carry the whole through. The silent members should have all the privileges except that of voting.

"They will be the college boys, — and you, Susie, and Bertha, and other people who do not want to pay more than two dollars. That is what they can pay."

As soon as the club was formed, the president would go to the Deritend, and offer to hire those rooms which Mrs. Oelrich had set her eyes upon, on condition that no bar should be kept in the house, and no license for liquor-selling asked for. On that condition the president should offer to hire and furnish these rooms, and hold out the temptation of bringing to the house the five hundred people most respected in the borough and in the county. And if, to gain the condition, it was necessary, the president was to offer the Deri-

tend House three thousand dollars rent for the rooms!

"Of course it is more than they pay for the whole house. But it will show we mean work. And for one year we can raise this money, and do this thing.

"For next year, let next year care."

This was Mrs. Oelrich's bold plan.

But alas! at the same moment, Satan, — or was it Belial? — or possibly Beelzebub, had other plans in view.

CHAPTER V

AT THE BOTTOM

BERTHA and Susie were told that they might make a chance to drop a hint about our club to the Gregg girls, and that the Gregg girls might sound their brothers about it.

Mrs. Oelrich was quite willing to have the young men think the matter over before she approached them with any formal proposition. Indeed, it was rather hard to say in what form any proposition could come, or whom it should come from.

For Mrs. Oelrich was like all other inventors who introduce an element wholly new into human society. To form her new stocking, she had to "make believe" once all round, and, for her first row of visible stitches, to knit into stitches which existed only in her imagination.

So Bertha made a chance to sound Fanny Gregg, and Fanny Gregg made a chance to sound her brothers. Both Horace and Frank were interested. Horace thought it all but impossible, but Frank thought it practicable. Anyway, they did n't snub their sisters, as the girls had feared they might, but said they would turn it over, and be ready to talk to the ladies, if they would come to them again.

Meanwhile, quite unexpectedly, Bertha Oelrich secured the co-operation of Will Gadsden in the new enterprise. Very much amazed she was to find herself walking with him or talking with him, and much more amazed to find herself in alliance with him. Bertha knew, as every other girl in town knew, the whole story of his delirium tremens, and his disgrace. She did not know, as it happened, what half the girls in town knew, that he had come back to the scene of this disgrace. Susie could have told her, but just then Susie would have died before she would have whispered his name even to Bertha, although Bertha was her dearest friend.

So Bertha was amazed to find herself walking across the Green with him, and, still more, talking to him almost confidentially.

She had left the Deritend after calling on Fanny Gregg, on whom none of the house of Oelrich had ever called before. She was hurrying across the Green, when Will Gadsden met her and touched his hat. Bertha just bowed, as coldly as she knew how.

Will Gadsden, however, turned and followed her. "Let me speak to you, Miss Oelrich, for one moment only. It is about poor John Corkery. My friend, Mr. Ruther, has just left me, and I know he spoke to your mother about him.

"We have opened our reading-room in the old grog-shop: to-night we are to have quite a little festivity at the opening. A good many of the railroad hands will be there, and, I am proud to say, one or two of the old habitués besides poor John himself, who, I am afraid, knew the place only too well. He will be there on duty for the first time. Miss Bertha, it occurred to Ruther, and it occurred to me too, that if your father were driving out of town, and could stop a moment and say an encouraging word to John, it would do him more good than all the rest of us put together, do."

Bertha was all amazed, and upside down. She was walking fast, and he by her. She stopped, and put out her hand, and said, "Thank you, ever so much, Mr. Gadsden. I am almost sure he will, even if he has to drive in on purpose; and I, or my mother, could we come too?"

"Indeed, yes! we should be only too happy," said the handsome fellow, smiling, and looking happy and at ease for the first time in the interview. "A great many of the men's wives will be there, and I know you will be glad to come." And then he would not walk with her a moment more. He retained the whole air of a person who spoke

to her on business, and nothing more. He touched his hat again, turned back and walked the other way.

And this with Bertha Oelrich, with whom he had sauntered by the hour by the side of the canal, and danced, by the hour almost, in her father's drawing-rooms!

But that evening Mr. Oelrich and Bertha did come in to the dedication. And Mr. Oelrich talked with John Corkery, man fashion, cordially and kindly. And Bertha Oelrich talked with Mr. Ruther, talked about the Wadsworth Club, and how she first learned the "four mottoes," about the original ten, and the Kermadeck Islands, and many other things which are to this reader Hebrew.

And then, when Mr. Ruther was called to other guests, she found herself by Will Gadsden, and because she was resolved to break his fence she said to him, —

"So you are counted in with Mr. Ruther's 'we,' Mr. Gadsden? I asked him, and mother asked him, who 'we' are; but we got very short answers."

He laughed, and said: "You will hardly get more from me. For, indeed, I cannot claim to belong to the 'we' you speak of. I have hardly been a week in town, you know; and almost all this set of men are new to me, for they have come here since I went away. At least I did not know them in those days. But the very first day I

came I had to wait in Mr. Ruther's office half an hour for the answer to a despatch he had sent for me, and, while I was there, two of his right-hand men were waiting for him also. There is one of them, — that man who is opening the box of crackers. Well, their talk was about some such thing as this, — it was the baggage of a poor drunken woman that had gone astray and they were hunting up for her. They could not wait, and I took their message, — glad enough to be of use, — and that seemed to bring me into connection with Mr. Ruther and his 'we.'

"You see," he added, at first in a hurried way, and then more quietly, "if you want to make such a woman as she was live a higher life, — or such a man as your friend John, here, — you must not be harping on one string all the time; and least of all must she herself be that string, or he himself. You must give them somebody else to care for, worse off than they are, or else your pledges, or your resolutions, or what not, are not worth the paper they are written on. But when you get hold of people as affectionate as these Irish people are, it is 'mighty easy' to make them forget themselves, and even to tread under foot their love of whisky, if you get them fairly excited about somebody else.

"I know it is so, Miss Oelrich," he added more gravely still.

"And I know it is so," said Bertha, "or I ought to know it. And I am much obliged to

you for putting it into a formula for me, though I suppose I should have found formulas enough if I had read my New Testament the right way.

"But do you know, Mr. Gadsden, that we talked all this over only on Wednesday?"

"I have a right to ask this time who are 'we'?"

"So you have," and she laughed. "Well, 'we' are my mother and —"

And then Bertha remembered, just too late of course, that the rest of her "we" were exactly the people whom it was hardest to talk of with Will Gadsden. But she was too far in to stop, and, with a face blazing to her hair as she went on, she did go on: "'We' are my mother and Mrs. Claridge, and Dr. Claridge, and Susie and Charlotte."

And by this time she rallied, even under fire, and managed to think that the club plan had been spoken of to somebody beside, and was fairly relieved that to the Claridge family she could add, —

"And Fanny Gregg and Clara Gregg, and I have asked them to speak to their brothers."

Will wanted to relieve her, and, as soon as she gave him a chance, he said, —

"And now it is my turn to be amazed; for, though I have seen Dr. Claridge in most varieties of company, I never thought of him before as going into partnership with the Greggs. He will find the boys are good fellows, too!"

Then Bertha explained, gaining her self-pos-

session as she went on, just what had passed, and what had not passed, in the talks her mother had had with Mr. Ruther and with Aunt Lois, and what she had said to the Greggs, and what she hoped they would say to their brothers. Of course Gadsden was interested: they sat together, talking earnestly, at the end of a settee, while Mr. Oelrich talked politics with the Superintendent of the railroad, and in a moment Will Gadsden beckoned Mr. Ruther to join them. "This man," said he, "knows more and better what we should do than we should find out in six months of blunders." George Ruther disclaimed the compliment, but came eagerly into the talk; and many was the scheme, possible and impossible, plausible and absurd, which these three young people threw out in the rapid mutual interruptions of that eager half hour.

So was it that, all unexpectedly, Bertha Oelrich enlisted two powerful coadjutors in her mother's plan.

But, as I intimated at the end of the last chapter, Satan, or Belial, or Beelzebub, had other plans in view.

Mr. Henry Kingsley has well said that, when the devil cannot find a knave to do his bidding he sends a fool; and that for many of his purposes a fool answers as well as a knave.

There is a melancholy truth in this remark, although it must not be pressed too far.

Horace and Frank Gregg carefully talked over

the "great project," as Horace called it, in memory of the great project of Sully and King Henry, which, alas! came to nothing. Frank had figured upon it, and Horace studied upon it in inquiries too great for figures. Each of them was quite willing to have Mrs. Oelrich bring in her plans, and each of them had suggestions to make to her, both of them glad, if they could, to carry on the Deritend without "perpendicular drinking," when their father came home from a visit, which he called a visit on business to Pittsburg. This visit had retained him there four or five days.

Mr. Gregg, the father, is the fool of whom I have spoken.

The young men had, of course, meant to open to him the new plan as soon as it was in any way ripe. But they were only too well used to carrying on the whole concern themselves, without his lifting one straw's weight of responsibility, and, naturally enough, they had not expected from him any serious opposition as to any suggestion which they might have to make, so they only made sure a regular income for the house, which, in truth, was more than the house had ever had.

Horace said to him at breakfast-time, the day after he returned, that he hoped he would not go out till they had had a chance to talk. The place of Mr. Gregg at meal-times was to preside at the head of the first table, while Horace was in the

pantry overseeing the carving, and Frank in the office downstairs.

"No!" said Mr. Gregg. "I have some good news for you!"

When, after breakfast, the father and son met in the little room behind the bar that still bore the sign of "Private Office," which had been painted there in the days of the Deritend's grandeur, Horace was not a little curious as to what this "good news" might be. His father was himself a little afraid of it, he hesitated about bringing it out, and indeed asked Horace first what he wanted to say to him.

Horace, trying to be brief, but becoming quite interested, and talking more than he meant, explained the plan of bringing a wholly new revenue to the house by the institution of a "Deritend club" for gentlemen and ladies.

Mr. Gregg heard without much interest, evidently had something else on his mind, hardly asked a question indeed; but, when Horace had done, he said, —

"Yes, that is all very well, except this tomfoolery about giving up the bar. If they want good club-rooms, they will have to come to us. There is nobody else in town that they can go to, and we can make very good terms with them, I dare say.

"Now, what I have to tell you is much more definite, and it takes no combinations of men and women, to put five hundred dollars' wholly new

profits to our bank account before three weeks are over!"

And then he explained to Horace, half aghast at the explanation, that he had stumbled by the greatest luck on a man named Ferry, at Pittsburg, who was the assignee of a bankrupt liquor-house there, and had, at that moment, to close off without a day's delay all the residue of the table wines of this concern. There were thirty dozen of Champagne, a few boxes of Golden Sherry, ten or twelve broken boxes of Claret, all of good enough quality for hotel use, and beside these some fancy wines, "Green Seal," "Comet-brand," "Cabinet, 1862," and I know not what else, such as never were in the Deritend from the day it was built. "Why, Horace," said the poor old man, in his excitement, "he gave me here the original valuation of the stock, as Wyegate & Foss bought it, — copied from the original invoices. If they were not cheated, — and nobody ever cheated them, — this very wine cost them, — see here, it cost them one thousand four hundred and twenty-three dollars. And, Horace, he offered it all to me, if I would close for the whole of it, for one half the amount on that paper."

If Horace were half-aghast when his father began, he was quite aghast now. But he contained himself.

"That would be a bargain, indeed," said he, "for any one who wanted to make it. But, for us

here, I would almost offer those terms to anybody who would take our higher grade wines off our hands. They were what broke Cookman, and I think Gladstone before him here. Why, we do not use in this house ten dollars' worth of first grade sherry or Madeira in three months, and there has not been two dozen of champagne opened here in the last year!"

"No, there has not been," said his father eagerly, "but there must be! This club of yours must do it. I have been thinking of that all day yesterday, that when we had something we could really recommend we should get such people as Gustav Oelrich and Verspanner and the Thorps and the Stevenses in here. If you want to keep a first-class house, you must have first-class preparations, Horace!"

"Yes, father, if you can. But we cannot. Why, I find it hard to pay for the oats and hay the horses use in the stables, and where I am to get another coach, when the great Alleghanian line opens, I am sure I do not know. We must be satisfied, for a while yet, with earning to-day what we spend to-morrow."

He said this as respectfully as he could, for he saw the mood his father was in, and he did not want to cross him. But he was wholly too late. Mr. Gregg brought down his hand with a blow on the table, and said with an oath, —

"We won't be satisfied, my boy, with any such nonsense! We will have a decent house here

yet, and something fit to put before decent men. And what I had to tell you was, that I was too much for this cunning Ferry, shrewd as he thought himself. I told him says I, just what you say to me, — says I, 'There's no demand for high-class wines in Bromwich, and I've got no seven hundred dollars to give you,' says I. And says he, — he'd been drinking a little more than he knew himself, — and says he, 'What's a hundred dollars or so to part friends?' says he, 'name your own price, Gregg,' says he. And says I, 'Ferry,' says I, 'if you'll pack all the wine yourself,' says I, 'and pay the freight,' says I, 'why, I'll give you five hundred dollars for the lot,' says I, — 'and I won't give you a damned cent more,' says I. And, Horace, do you think the fool was so hard up that he took me up. He agreed right off to the bargain. He had the wine boxed on Tuesday, and it'll be here by the freight to-night. That's what I waited for!"

"Be here!" said poor Horace, almost screaming. "You have not paid for it! How did he ever let it go without the money?"

"Haven't I paid for it?" said his father, severely. "You don't know how good our credit is then! I have given him the note of the concern payable in thirty days, and he took that for cash. Didn't ask me to add one cent to the face of the note, because I had not the money by me."

Poor Horace, indeed! It was too late to say to his father that they would no more have the

money by them in a month than to-day. His father never had understood that "debt" was one of the two devils who consume modern society. Horace himself, perhaps, did not yet understand that "drink" is the other. To have persuaded anybody anywhere to intrust to their keeping any thing of any value, in exchange for a piece of paper, was to this shiftless creature a victory. And Horace and Frank had to make good many a blunder, which by this delusion of his was created.

"Now," said he, fairly rubbing his hands with satisfaction, and wholly unconscious of the weight of what Horace had said, "what you must do — and Frank, and I too — I shall not hold back — is to get two or three nice parties together here. The Farmers' Club must come, and the college boys must come, and we must blow well about our new stock. It must all be landed here in the daytime, Grosbeck must give you a puff in the 'Eagle' on Saturday, and, Horace, we'll have your money in the bank by the sale of this very champagne. Don't you trouble yourself about the note! I'll see to that myself, my dear boy."

See to it himself! As if he had seen to anything but the wretchedness and improvidence of his family since the day he was married to poor Charlotte Sturtevant, and this ill-fated family began!

Horace was in despair. He went and found Frank, and they closeted themselves together.

To cut loose from the whole thing, to go to Melbourne or to Yokohama together, would be a blessing. But it was too late for that. They were in the firm, and they could not so easily get out of it. Besides, here were the girls and their mother and the little Fred. No: this was the worst misery their father had lately brought on them. For lately they had kept him to his place as figure-head, and he had shown no disposition to take other place; glad enough, indeed, to have nothing to do, and to have no one goading him to do anything. But this new freak, bad enough in itself, showed to both of them the danger they were in, in mere matters of money. Then, for self-respect, for decency! Oh, after what had passed with Mrs. Claridge, after the message they had sent to Mrs. Oelrich, that they should seem to be defying the whole town by this outrageous purchase of wines which everybody knew they could not use, unless they wholly changed the house from what it was even now, — all this was madness!

"Worst of all," said Frank, "that we are expected to decoy Freshmen and Sophomores down here to drink stuff that even old Wyegate could not put off on his customers. I never expected to be asked to do as low work as that is. And then to have that dirty Grosbeck puff us for enterprise in his lying 'Eagle'! Oh, Horace, Horace! how have I deserved to be disgraced so!"

The dirty Grosbeck and the lying "Eagle" did their part of the work only too well. Mr. Gregg sent round his compliments to Mr. Grosbeck, — with a bottle of the new champagne, one of the claret, and one of the "Green Seal," — and his hope that he would call and see the addition that had been made to the Deritend stores at noon on Saturday. And in its "issue" of Saturday, the "Eagle" announced that —

"Our excellent friends of the Deritend seem to 'bate no bit of courage as they watch the surging of the great Temperance wave. Eager to meet the demands of an intelligent community, they have given orders in advance to their agents in the great commercial cities, and have been fortunate enough to secure in New York, at the private sale of a connoisseur, a consignment of choice wines fit for an emperor's table. We speak from the *best authority*, 'crede experto,' when we say that no such wines as were received from New York by the Central Railroad on Thursday, at the Deritend, ever before crossed the Alleghany Mountains!

"This is the fit response which these young gentlemen, and mine host, their worthy father, make to the impudent message of the Women's Conference. Had not the ladies better try again?"

And as Mrs. Oelrich read this in the "Eagle" on Saturday, and as Susie showed it to her mother, it was the first answer either of them had to the overtures which Bertha had been told she might address to Fanny Gregg, for Fanny to communicate to her brothers.

Poor Aunt Lois! I remember she laid down the paper with a sigh.

"I had thought better of those young men," said she.

CHAPTER VI

CAN WE, AND HOW?

WILL GADSDEN had read the "Eagle" of Saturday before Mrs. Oelrich, and before Aunt Lois.

Will Gadsden had seen the triumphal reception of the boxes of wine on Thursday. He had seen the delight of the bar-tender, the fatuous self-gratulation of Mr. Gregg, the jolly sympathy of all the negro waiters, who would have sympathized equally with anything which made excitement, had it been Father Mathew delivering an address on the doorstep, or had it been the broaching of a cask of whisky.

Will Gadsden had also observed that Horace Gregg had, with very unusual parade, driven off to buy some oats, hours before the wine arrived, as soon as breakfast was over, announcing that he should not be back till night; and that Frank, with equal noise, and attracting all the observation possible, had taken the morning train to Toledo, and would not return till Sunday morning. Will was a good deal interested, and not displeased to see that the young men took themselves out of the way.

After what Bertha Oelrich had told him, and what he knew she had said to Fanny Gregg, he felt determined to learn, if a man could learn without impertinence, what all this meant, and if Mr. Grosbeck of the "Eagle" was right in saying that here was an answer of defiance to poor Aunt Lois's visit, of which of course the village had been informed, with more or less explanations, within the day after it had been made. Will, also, thought better of the young men than to believe that the parade was of their making. They had put themselves intentionally out of the way yesterday, and it seemed doubtful if they would be more communicative to-day. Will knew, or thought he knew, that Fanny Gregg would die before she would speak of the matter. He also knew, or thought he knew, that Clara Gregg, if he fell into talk with her, would, before she knew it, come out with the whole train of the family politics, and that he should know in fifteen minutes where the sinews of war had been found, — who had conceived this bold reply to the ladies, who had voted for it in family conclave, and who against it; that he should know, indeed, all there was to be known. Will Gadsden was not perfection, as the reader knows, though he was so handsome. And he was sorely tempted for a moment to ask Clara Gregg if she would not like to drive to the Glen with him that afternoon, — quite certain, first, that she would gladly go; and, second, that he should know all there was to be known before they returned. But

Will, if frail, was a gentleman: so he dismissed the thought of cross-questioning Clara as soon as it rose; looked again for Horace, — looked in vain; and then sought George Ruther, his better self, to tell him that he was tempted to sound Frank Gregg and Horace, and to ask him if it would do more harm than good. He actually passed Fanny Gregg in the doorway. She was going out also, as if for some shopping; and, as Will passed her, he confessed to himself that, if it had been the pretty, gentle Clara, rather than the tall, handsome beauty, he should have considered this too good a chance to be lost, and have reconsidered his resolution. But it was not Clara, and he hurried on. As he turned the corner of the street, he could not but notice that Bernard Claridge had joined Miss Fanny. Very well: what was more natural?

"I am a fool," said Will Gadsden to himself, "and I make a mystery of everything I think upon."

As this passed through his mind, he stopped for a moment at the bookstore, to order his "Galaxy," and to enter his name as a candidate for the Book Club; and there, as it chanced, he met Bertha Oelrich again. Her father's carriage, with John Corkery's successor, was waiting for her at the side door.

Will Gadsden did not notice Bertha, but she did notice him at the moment he came in. And then as he turned to go out, with a frankness which I think did her infinite credit, though it is not advised in the "Young Lady's Companion," this "nice,"

wide-awake girl bravely crossed the shop, and called him before he fairly stepped into the street again.

"Really, I beg your pardon, Mr. Gadsden, but I know my mother wants to know something that only you can tell."

Of course Will said he was at her service or her mother's.

Bertha saw that she had unwittingly called the attention of two or three college boys who were turning over the new books in the little shop, and of the attentive clerks as well. She certainly did not wish to discuss the Deritend Club in their hearing, far less did she want to take Will Gadsden into a corner, as if there were any mystery. Will had tact enough to help her, had he known what her purpose was; but how can you help any one, till you know what she wants to do?

But Bertha solved her own difficulties.

"The lilac, if you please, Mr. Catlin, — the chocolate, and the lavender; but not the pink, nor the salmon color. Will you please see to the envelopes yourself? At eleven o'clock? Then Conrad here will call when he comes round for my father. Have you a moment, Mr. Gadsden? Then perhaps you will come into the carriage with me. I will set you down wherever you are going."

Will handed her into the carriage, followed her, and said he was going to Mr. Ruther's office.

He laughed, and added, "I should stop on the way at our famous new Reading-room, and see if he is not 'loafing' there."

Bertha gave the proper order, and then said, "I did not want to talk with all those people hearing all I said; but mamma is wretched about the failure of our club.

"Why, she had talked about it by day and by night. She had persuaded herself that she was going to remodel the village society of America."

"I think she was," said Will Gadsden, gravely.

"Then you understand how enthusiastic she grew about it. Why, she said that the married women all fall back from their girlish enthusiasms and accomplishments, because they have no chance, even for a moment, to meet each other, or even to meet the men they knew when they were young. She says, in her club, she should see Dr. Claridge and Professor Brenner and Mr. Warburton and John Faunce, and I do not know who not, whom now she never sees except at a conference meeting on the other side of the church. She says she used to know them all as well as — as well as I know you, Mr. Gadsden," said Bertha, bravely; "and she says it's a great pity that just because she is married that should all die away.

"She says society, in such a town as this, is all in the hands of the boys and girls; and she implies that we are all fools, and I am sure some of us are," said Bertha, laughing.

"To tell you the truth," said Gadsden, "I have been brooding rather on the other side. Take as fine a fellow as Ruther here. He plays on the piano better than any man I ever heard, — played Mozart and Chopin and Beethoven, and even Wagner, to me last night till the clock struck twelve. Now, he will not go to dancing-parties; I certainly cannot expect him to go on a sleigh-ride; he would not shine in a prayer meeting. Where is such a man as he to meet, let me say, such a woman as your mother, or as Mrs. Claridge, or as Mrs. Faunce? Of course he can make evening calls. But you know what that means."

"That 's just what mother says. She says if he came in to read his 'Spectator,' just as she looked in to see if the 'Atlantic' had come, she should know he was at leisure, and he would know she was.

"Now, is it not too bad to think that all these grand plans are to be broken by the hatefulness of those spiteful Greggs? I did not think anybody could bear such malice."

"My dear Miss Oelrich, pray give them the benefit of a doubt!" cried Will, eagerly. And then she saw that his eager, handsome face grew grave, as he touched his hat, almost solemnly, to some one whom they drove by. Bertha turned as quickly as was decent, but only guessed that it was Susie Claridge who had such power to change her companion's expression. Will Gadsden tried

to rally, but in fact forgot what he was talking about, and could only say, —

"I am going to Mr. Ruther, and, as I said, I think it is as likely as not that he will be at the new Reading-room." Then he remembered that he was going to talk with him about the Greggs, and to ask whether it would be quite impossible to enlist the younger men in some Union of the young men of the town, in which women might join with self-respect and decency. But he fell again into one of his eulogies on George Ruther, and what he was, and what he could do.

Bertha Oelrich all this time was wondering how she could manage to overtake Susie, and tell her how it happened that she was carrying Will Gadsden down the main street at ten o'clock in the morning. Even she hesitated as to whether she should dare speak Will's name to Susie.

Mr. Ruther was at the news-room, or on the threshold, and came forward most heartily to welcome Miss Oelrich, and gave his hand to Will as he stepped from the carriage. I need not say that John Corkery recognized the horses, but the poor fellow did not dare appear till he heard Bertha call him, and Mr. Ruther knocked on the window.

"We had a very pleasant evening, John, and mamma will come the next club evening. And, John, Walter wants you to order Frank Leslie's 'Boys' and Girls'' magazine for him, and he will stop himself and pay you."

John Corkery was twice the man for being publicly recognized thus, in his new vocation.

As he went back to the shop, George Ruther said, "I was going to see your father, Miss Bertha; but, if you have a minute, you will do quite as well. May I stop you so long?"

"May you not, indeed?" said she, and she swung her locket. "You may, unless you want me to look down, to look in, and to look backwards."

"Not that, I am sure," said he, laughing. "Yet I want you to carry a message, such as I think you never carried before.

"I do not know in the least what Mr. Oelrich's theory of the liquor laws is, nor do I care. Every man has his own. But I feel sure that he will agree with us that on any theory fifty-one open bars are too many for Bromwich. The college men feel it an insult; our railroad men find it an insult; even the respectable dealers, as they like to call themselves, would cut the number down if they could. But it is so convenient for the politicians to have just so many rallying places for voters that I believe if a hundred and fifty men asked for licenses they would all have them granted.

[Our law in this matter, as I ought to say to readers in other States, is a "Local Option" law. That is what they call it in England. Every town decides for itself the question of prohibition or license. Licenses are granted only by the county court, which has cognizance of civil and criminal

suits, and is therefore well acquainted with the class of people who apply for and recommend licenses. These cannot be granted except to a limited number, and on the recommendation of twelve responsible voters. No liquor must be sold to minors, intemperate persons, or on Sunday.]

"I wanted you to ask your father if he and his foreman, and some of the other gentlemen on the hill, would not appear next week in support of our remonstrance against the licensing of these Northern people again. Their house is bad in every way. They sell liquor to the schoolboys in the No. 4 school. I shall have ten witnesses to prove that. They sell all day long on Sunday. Poor John here knows that. And as for selling to drunkards, good heavens! They make night terrible there. I have to pass there three nights in the week after the express has left, and I do not like to tell you, Miss Bertha, of the things that go on there."

Bertha was trembling with sympathy, not to say with rage. She would tell her father all that Mr. Ruther said, and then she asked, "Who do you say awards these licenses, — prizes for good behavior, I suppose they are?"

"Why, Judge Converse is the sitting judge this term. The applications come before him."

"Mr. Eli Converse, who lives next the Claridges?"

"Of course. He is on this circuit this term."

"Why should not we all go? I was in court once, at the Bearn trial. I think all the ladies would like to go. Would there be any harm?"

"No harm," said George Ruther, gravely. "I should think there might be great good."

And so he bade her good-by. She drove up College Hill to find Susie Claridge, and the young men walked away together.

CHAPTER VII

CARD-PLAYING AND CHAMPAGNE

WILL GADSDEN always spent more time than he meant when he joined George Ruther, and occupied himself with forty things which seemed at the moment very necessary, though they were not perhaps quite necessary to a young student of law. But, as Will said, it was Saturday, and there were no lectures, so he might indulge himself a little in the practice, in what the boys at the Medical School would call the Clinique. It was soon dinner-time: he was glad to accept an invitation to dine with Ruther. Then came the pleasant German lesson, which he gave to them all there twice a week; and then Ruther proposed that all hands should take an excursion to the Water-Gap, going out by an accommodation train and returning by an express. A pleasant day for Will, who sighed for society in his attic

at the Deritend, and who in his old life at Bromwich had lived in very different fashion.

George Ruther did not expect much help from the young Greggs in what he and Gadsden hoped for, for the younger men of the college and town; but still he did not dissuade Will from sounding them. "I do not see as it can do any harm," he said. "But such people are apt to be on their mettle," said he. "You see we say very hard things of them." So Will went home to the Deritend at ten at night, resolved to find Frank or Horace if he could.

He looked in at the various common rooms, and saw no one. There were one or two travellers in the reading-room, but no one whom he knew. Then he opened the door of a corner parlor, which generally nobody sat in, but which was in no sort private, because he had noticed that it was lighted, and he remembered that he had seen Frank Gregg reading there of a stormy evening when nothing was passing.

In a moment he saw that he intruded on the company, and he begged pardon and closed the door. But in an instant it flew open.

"Come back, come back, Mr. Gadsden! No secrets here! no green curtains nor close blinds in this house, Mr. Gadsden. We show our colors here! Come in, come in, — all friends here! Some old friends of yours. Glad to see you back again. Take a seat, Mr. Gadsden. I've been away ever since you came back! Here's a clean

glass, I believe, — good as clean anyway. What will you take? Here 's to old times, Mr. Gadsden!"

Poor Will was ashamed, and really in terror. All this voluble welcome was from Mr. Gregg, who had not seen him since he left Bromwich, or since, as I said, he was taken away. True, it was ten days, more or less, since Will had taken his lodgings there; ten days which seemed an eternity to him, as it marked an infinite change in his own life. But they were so short that Mr. Gregg's visit to Pittsburg had covered more than half of them. And it was true that, while he welcomed the old Will Gadsden, it was the new Will Gadsden who received the welcome, and received it in presence of six or eight old "friends," so called, all of whom he had met, in old days, at the bar of this very Deritend.

All of them who could stand started up to welcome him. Mr. Grosbeck, of the "Eagle," is the only one with whom the reader is, or need be, acquainted.

Will shook hands as cordially as he could, did not take the offered chair, but tried to excuse himself by saying that he was looking for Frank, and had thought he should find him here.

"Frank! oh! Frank! where is Frank! Oh, yes, Frank! He 'll be here in a minute, Mr. Gadsden, — take a seat, take a seat, and wait for him. I 'll send for him. Frank, — yes, oh, yes! he 's just stepped out. Sit down, Mr. Gadsden,

and try this Golden Seal, Mr. Gadsden. I'm glad to offer so good a glass of wine as that to so good a judge."

This from Mr. Gregg to poor Will, who had trained himself to regard any drop of wine for him as being sent by some devil from the pit.

"How kind you are, Mr. Gregg! I see you have not changed in three years. You know we always said that you were too good to your guests, and were too hospitable for a landlord.

"I have given up drinking wine. But I will gladly wish 'Prosperity to the Deritend!' Perhaps you do not know that I am living under your roof?"

"Give up drinking wine! Nonsense, boy! You may very well give up what they have been giving you over in the Old Dominion; but you don't find such sherry as this every night. Bring us a clean glass, Sandy, — a clean glass for Mr. — Mr. — Mr. Gadsden. Sit down, Gadsden, — sit down. Frank! yes, Frank, will be here in a minute, — in a minute. Sandy, what are you bothering about there? leave your fiddling, and go find Mr. Frank, and tell him here is a friend who wants to see him."

Poor Will had made his own pit by being fool enough to give a reason where none was necessary. And he was just irresolute enough to sit down in the place which Mr. Gregg had made for him, between his chair and Colonel Somebody's. But Will would not touch either the claret or

the glorified sherry. Indeed, Mr. Gregg hardly noticed whether he did or did not. He was in exactly that condition of body or mind in which he doubted whether he could talk coherently, and so was trying experiments all the time by way of assuring himself and others that he could. And Will would have escaped under cover of those wearisome iterations about Frank and Frank's accidental absence, and of Sandy's bringing Frank, without Mr. Gregg's knowing what he drank or caring. But Mr. Grosbeck was in another physical or mental condition, — that of fight, namely. Having been much complimented by the company on the manner in which he "had given the women fits in the 'Eagle,'" — that subject, indeed, having been largely dwelt upon in the little supper of the evening, which was now drawing to its close, — Mr. Grosbeck wanted to show that his wit was still keen, and his stroke exact, and where he saw a head he meant to hit it. The sight of two full glasses by a guest who drank nothing engaged his attention, and he saw at once that here might be foeman worthy of his steel.

"Prosperity to the Deritend!" he cried: "prosperity to the Deritend! Why don't you drink to your own toast, Mr. Gadsdad? what's a toast for, when you don't drink to it?" Then he turned to the Colonel who was at his right, and said, "These travelled gentlemen see so much Tokay and Johannisberg, and they hob-a-nob

with so many kings and emperors, that they can't touch any liquor when they get home. But" — with an oath or two " — brother Gregg's Golden Seal is good enough for me!"

"What's that you say?" said Mr. Gregg, — diverted unfortunately from his experiment of saying what he could say coherently, by this sudden onslaught, — "Mr. Gadsden says our wine is not good enough for him! Mr. Gadsden, let me tell you that Henry Clay himself drank a bottle of that very wine you turn up your nose at, — he drank it the day of the big flood on Allegheny; and he said he would be damned if it was not the best sherry that ever come out of Proosia, Mr. Gadsden. Isn't Henry Clay sherry good enough for you?" and he pushed back his chair with an air that implied that if Will did not drink the sherry he would wring Will's neck for him.

Will knew he must humor them all, unless he wanted a fight. He knew, first of all, that here was no time to preach temperance to them, nor to offer them any other pearls. Indeed, he had no object really at heart but to get out of the room without having his own head broken, if he could, and without disgracing Mrs. Gregg's husband, if it were possible. With more tact than could have been hoped for, he said, —

"Prince Metternich has no such wine as that, Mr. Gregg. That I know from the man who supplies his own table, whom I saw when I was

in Frankfort. If he had, I agree with you, that the man who drinks bad wine when he can get good is a fool."

"Very well," cried Mr. Grosbeck," — very well. Now stand to your own text, Mr. Parson, and drink good wine when you have it. Gentlemen, I promise that Mr. Gaderad's toast be drunk standing. All up! fill up, everybody! prosperity to the Deritend, gentlemen! There! see what I say, gentlemen: this is a spy from the women's camp. He won't drink his own toast. Turn him out, gentlemen!" All this, with expletive oaths wherever there was an opportunity.

"I should have been glad enough to have been quietly turned out," said Will the next day to George Ruther; "but it was pretty clear that any sacrifice of that sort on my part would have made matters worse. Old Gregg fairly had his hand on my shoulder; but I laughed good-naturedly again, put it off, and said, —

"'Wait till I have told you a story. This Metternich wine that you talk about, this Johannisberg, — sour stuff, I am afraid we should think it, all of us, — is bottled by an agent of this gentleman I tell you of, in whose wine-vaults I spent two afternoons in Frankfort.'

"I had got as far as this, and was wondering how I was to spin out my tale till I could decently slip to the door, when — smash! — we heard a window crash outside; then an agonized yell

from a woman; then the sound of a heavy fall, and of some weight crashing terribly down the great stairway. And, of course, all who could now ran instantly into the hall, to know what it was which had happened."

It was at heavy cost that poor Will had been saved. The sight before the company as they rushed into the hall was indeed terrible. The crash, whatever it was, had wrenched off a burner of the hanging hall chandelier, so that the gas was pouring out from the full pipe, and a lurid, smoky wave of fire was blazing up against the plaster. Senseless across the hall, upon the marble floor, lay Mrs. Meiers, one of the boarders, whom Will recognized as a lady to whom he bowed every morning as he saw her at her seat in the breakfast room. One or two people were trying to lift her. On the stairway, motionless also, was her husband, his head just touching the marble of the floor. Evidently he had fallen, as he ran downstairs. A negro waiter was clumsily trying to lift him; and an exasperating crowd of men and women on the stairway above, enlarging at every moment, were screaming and howling, and doing nothing — as indeed how should they? — to help in the catastrophe.

The presence of Mr. Gregg and his two colonels and Mr. Grosbeck did not do much to restore order. But the presence of Will Gadsden and of Horace Gregg, who emerged at the same moment from what was called "the private

office," did. Not without a certain firm violence, but still in wonderfully short time, a cork was put into the broken gas pipe. Half a dozen candles were brought out in the great plated candelabra of the ladies' drawing-room, and lighted after a minute's fuss. Poor Mrs. Meiers was tenderly carried by Will himself and one of the porters into the drawing-room, and Fanny Gregg and her mother took charge of her. Meiers's body was laid decently and reverently, as becomes death, upon the long settle on which the porters were wont to sit in the hall. The colonels and other "guests" of this ill-fated evening were led to the door, unless they found their own way there, and, as the last of them intimated his willingness to stay and help, Frank Gregg said calmly, and very loudly, "The house is closed for the night." And then, as his unwilling guest withdrew, he shoved the great bolt with an emphasis which the bystanders felt. And then to the quiet group of onlookers who belonged in the house, he said, "Really, you had better leave for your rooms. I have sent for Dr. Etter and Dr. Drummond. With my mother and sisters, and all the girls and the porters, we can do all that is needed. Good-night, all!"

So that, in presence of his firmness, the excited throng dispersed and retired.

CHAPTER VIII

SEVEN MEN OF HONEST REPORT

MEIERS, the victim of the Saturday night tragedy at the Deritend, was always supposed to be a German, and by birth he probably was. He was a tradesman in thriving business, carrying on with a good deal of enterprise and skill a shop on the corner of the street, where he sold almost everything, from a china mug with a child's name on it in gold round to a boot-jack or a drover's whip. The old established storekeepers of the town did not like him or his: they always called him a Jew, and called his shop the Jew shop. And I know the ladies always made some excuse for having gone there, as if the constitution and laws of Bromwich required that they should "trade" at certain other establishments which had been in operation since Bromwich was a cluster of log cabins. But, all the same, they did "trade" there a great deal. He called his shop "The Auction Store," in very big letters. And he printed shop-bills with the same heading: that was a grandeur that nobody else in town indulged in.

Although Meiers was called a German, he spoke as good English as most of us did; and he led about with him this poor little wife, who was in her dialect and aspect an unmistakable Vir-

ginian. She had had, as we learned, a hard time of it before they established themselves at Bromwich. Meiers was kind enough when he was himself, — and he would be himself for months, not to say years, — but then, just as his house was swept and garnished, seven devils worse than ever had lived there before would come raging in, pell-mell, together. That is to say, he would go on a "spree," "bender," "lark," "time," or whatever the vernacular of his region might call it; and then woe to poor Mrs. Meiers and her two little children.

But lately things had been better. Prosperity was good for Meiers, as I have found it to be for most men. His enterprise at Bromwich began by his bringing in some auction goods for sale, and opening a disused shop for them, expecting to fold his wings like the Arabs and be gone in a fortnight to some other Bromwich. But there was a demand for his laces and muslins, the shop could be had for little or no rent, and it all ended in his establishment as a permanent retail trader, with as good a run of custom as any man had in the county. He sent for his wife and children, and took pretty rooms for them at the Deritend. He shaved very little; but for the first time in his life he shaved daily. He took seats in church and voted at elections, which he had never done before. Instead of being a wandering Ishmaelite, he gave bonds to society, and settled down as a person who had a character to maintain.

All this was very happy for poor Mrs. Meiers and her children.

What they did, or how they spent their time, I am sure nobody knew, and I am afraid nobody cared. In the daytime Mrs. Meiers was behind a counter in the shop, and the ladies were always glad to see her there. In the evening, as Fanny Gregg told me, they always had a good deal of company in their room; but never, till this fatal night, had there been any disturbance there.

On Saturday morning, however, Meiers had told his wife that they were to have a euchre-party in the evening, and had told her whom he should ask. They were a set of people, some Germans, some Americans, and one or two men from New Orleans, — Frenchmen, she supposed — who had been with him a good deal lately, and whom she hated. But playing euchre was something which happened so often there that she did not consider the party in the least out-of-the-way. She put on the children's best clothes and her own, bought some new packs of cards, ordered some apples, oranges, and almonds for the evening, and supposed her duty was done.

As indeed it was.

But when her husband came back to the hotel to tea, having closed the store early, he brought with him the two Frenchmen whom she hated; and so soon as tea was over, — long before the guests to whom she was used came in, — as if from very restlessness, poor Meiers made her sit

down with him and his two friends, and begin to play. Still they played nothing but euchre; and, although she did not quite understand his excitability, she was only too glad if it would work itself off on the cards. "I played wrong," said the poor woman, — "I played horribly; but that snake of a Le Maire, who was my partner, pretended not to care, though we lost all the time. How could I play with my husband in such a fever; and all the time the people coming in, and I getting up to welcome them?"

Well, by eight o'clock there were three games going on at three tables, fast and quiet, a little betting, but nothing of account. About nine, the poor little woman made a movement to produce her modest refection — rang, and nodded to the waiter who answered her bell. But when the simple fruit and water, which was quite the thing in our simple Bromwich customs, appeared, Meiers scowled at her, threw down his cards, wrote an order on the back of the paper in which the last pack was wrapped, and sent it to the office. It was answered in a moment by a tray of glasses, with champagne in ice. Then it was that for the first moment Mrs. Meiers understood that the new purchases of the Deritend had fired the devil who had slept so long, and that her little party was to be a famous wine-party for her husband's grand guests and for the others who had been bidden to meet them.

"Mrs. Odenheimer was the only lady there.

She stayed for one rubber after the wine came in, and then she went away and took her husband away. That broke up one table. I said I was tired and would not play. We had one table in my room and one in the little room, — Mr. Meiers has that. I sat knitting and talking with Laurence Odenheimer. He stayed. And in there, — oh! they played, and they played. They did not play euchre there, and I did not dare to see what they played. But twice he rang for more wine. At our table, too, Mr. Fish and Mr. Coffin got noisy, and Coffin turned round and asked me to order another bottle.

"Then I could not bear it any longer, I went and looked over Axel's shoulder. I saw that he did not know what he was doing. I bent over and just whispered, 'Axel, Mr. Coffin wants more wine, and I think he had better go.' Do you know, I don't think it was that: I think they were cheating him, or I think he was losing. He did not know — indeed he did not know — what he said or what he did. He threw me off, though I hardly touched him. He threw his cards in Le Maire's face. He turned on me as if I were a tiger, and bade me leave the room. He whirled up his chair as if he would strike Le Maire, and then he turned as if he would strike me!

"And I did leave the room. I did not know what I did; and I flung the door open, I was so frightened, and I ran downstairs. The last I remember is putting my hand on the banister."

Poor creature! she was flying from her own husband, when he flung the chair after her. It struck the chandelier, and that was perhaps the crash we heard. And then he missed his own footing, and then —

That was all!

All this, of course, came out at the coroner's inquest. Of course it was made public, with every odious detail, in the two weekly papers. The "Eagle" gave but a bungling account of it, strangely mixed up with a good deal of bragging that "we" were present, which bragging, of course, had to be somewhat abated by explanations that "we" knew nothing about the unfortunate calamity, and had nothing whatever to do with it, and had only arrived in time to render the services which were needed by the unfortunate lady. But any reticency on the part of the "Eagle" was fully made up for by the eagerness of the "Republic" to state all details. As soon as they found out in the "Republic" office that Grosbeck had been "drinking at the Deritend when the row happened," there was no danger but the public would get its full quantum of incident, nor any danger for Mr. Grosbeck lest his presence should pass unheeded.

Before the next week was over, there was an execution in poor Meiers's shop, on the suit of Le Maire and Guyon, the two Frenchmen, so called. They produced promises to pay, written in Meiers's hand and signed by him, which were

unquestionable. His bank account was drawn low, the estate was pronounced absolutely bankrupt, the books were in helpless confusion, and poor Mrs. Meiers and her children were beggars. The two Frenchmen left their claims in the hands of a miserable skinflint of an attorney we had in Bromwich. Then they went to Toledo, and that was the last we saw of them.

All this tragedy, and the talk which followed it, wrought people up to no ordinary interest when the day came round for the annual hearing of petitions for licenses. To tell the whole truth, I never knew till that year when licenses were granted, and hardly if they were granted. I only knew that there was a saloon or other liquor-shop in every street in town, except on the hill. But, as George Ruther had told Bertha Oelrich, here were fifty-one people to apply for this privilege this year, and they had to ask in form. Nor would anybody have asked for a fairer man to hear the petitions than Judge Converse. I do not know what he would have liked best. But the county had voted that licenses should be given, so there was no doubt he would give them to the people whom he thought most fit to hold so terrible a responsibility.

Meanwhile the women were everywhere. They had a general petition, that no open bars might be licensed, and the number of victuallers' and taverners' licenses might be much reduced. Then they had a "ward petition," in which they went

into details. They collected evidence regarding every man who asked for a license, and every woman. They had good counsel, and this time they knew what they were at.

Well, there was hardly a publican in Bromwich who could stand these tests.

It seemed as if all of them had sold on Sunday. Many and many a poor mother came in, and some said that this fellow and that had sold whisky to her boys and to her girls. The evidence was not very formal perhaps, but after one little incident it was not often challenged. That was this: —

"Petition of James Brosnihan, to be licensed as victualler, &c.

"Oyez, oyez! All ye who, &c., &c., &c., come into court!"

Wayland, who held the woman's memoranda for this ward, called Ellen Sullivan as a witness that Brosnihan had violated the conditions of his license last year, and had sold liquor on Sunday.

She was a pretty Irishwoman, frightened, but completely in earnest; and she told, at no great length, how her own brother, only fifteen years old, came home the very last Sunday evening "roaring tipsy, may it please your honor, — having been drinking at Brosnihan's all day since noon."

"Were you at Brosnihan's yourself, madam?" asked that gentleman's counsel.

"I 'm a decent woman, sir. God forbid that I should be seen inside his dirty doors!"

"How do you know, then, that your brother bought his liquor there?"

"Bekase he told me so, again and again, sir; and he never lies."

"May it please the court: the court sees that this is nothing but hearsay and tittle-tattle. I wonder that my brother Wayland takes up your honor's time with such fol-de-rol, which he knows is not testimony."

Wayland did not appear disturbed.

"My brother Fish does not like our testimony. I see a witness in court who ought to be relied on, certainly, if this petition is to be supported, — Mr. James Brosnihan himself. Will your honor swear him?"

"Certainly," said the judge, — "certainly. Nothing could be fairer, Mr. Fish. Swear James Brosnihan."

The hulking, stupid-looking tavern-keeper, who had come into court, as he had always done on such occasions, and had not sense enough to suspect that he should have been miles away, moved heavily towards the stand. Mr. Fish, his counsel, stepped quickly towards him.

"Oh, no! brother Fish, you need not advise the witness," said the judge, good-naturedly. "When I was at the bar, we used sometimes to advise witnesses a little before they came into court; but the witness must do without advice here. These are not cases on trial. The court is merely acting under direction of the legislature

and executive in a *quasi* executive position. All we want is to get at the best men for these services to the State.

"Swear Mr. Brosnihan."

And then it may well be imagined what confessions and contradictions poor Mr. Brosnihan was forced into, under Wayland's sharp cross-examination; Wayland being stimulated and directed by little slips of paper which Will Gadsden kept poking into his hand. Brother Fish hopped up two or three times, as "a friend of the court," he said; but, on the whole, he could not help his client much on the other side of the room. And before fifteen minutes were over, Brosnihan had said that he did not sell liquor Sunday; that perhaps he might have sold it without remembering it; that, on an effort to recollect, he thought it was quite possible he had sold it; that to travellers, indeed, he was almost sure his clerks had sold it; that, in fact, he remembered selling it to one traveller himself one Sunday afternoon; and, finally, that the only substantial difference between week-days and Sundays at his house was that on Sundays the wooden shutters were up and on week-days they were down.

Then Mr. Brosnihan was released, in an evident perspiration.

And no more hearsay evidence was challenged that day.

The women also broke down badly sometimes.

They had relied much too boldly on the wrongs of their own sex. But more than one Bridget Murphy and Clara Ganzhorn, who had been voluble enough and intelligible enough when they had told the stories of their wretchedness to sympathizing women in their own little "tenements," could not be brought to remember a word, or to say anything, when they were in their best clothes on the stand before the Judge, in presence of Mr. Fish; yes, and of certain husbands who would beat them within an inch of their lives, when they got home, if they were displeased with the drift of their testimony,

Still the field-day ended in a disastrous rout of the publican forces. The women had piled up so much testimony that Wayland and the other young gentleman who had volunteered as their counsel could well afford to have three-quarters of it break down. "If only," said Wayland, laughing afterwards, "they would have marked on the brief the witnesses that would stick as distinguished from those who were 'very interesting,' but had no backbones." The end of the matter was that there were not, of all the fifty-one petitioners, more than ten who passed with their skirts free through this terrible fire. Some of these possibly deserved their immunity. Thus the Deritend had merely sent in its petition, had no counsel and no representative; and young Revel, who held the women's memoranda for that ward, had not a witness against the Deritend whom he dared call. He

was quite sure that plenty of college boys had drunk at that bar, who were under age. But he could only suspect in general, and he knew the court would not let him call witnesses in the least at random. Actually, after all that had been said and written about the Deritend in the last month, in this tournament of tongues, nobody said one word against its fair fame.

"I would as gladly have put old Gregg on the stand, as you did your Mr. Brosnihan," said Revel to Wayland. "But, if he is an old fool, he knows enough to keep away from the court while his petition is read. I wonder if they had any counsel?"

"I think not," said Bernard Claridge, a little unguardedly. "Frank Gregg said the petition might stand or fall by itself; that if he was not a good citizen, sober and respectable, which is what the law requires, and Judge Converse thought he was not, he should like to know it."

And, as Bernard said this, he colored quite unnecessarily, and walked away from the little group of young lawyers. I wondered why.

You see in such a town as ours all the brightest young fellows at the county bar were in "Society;" and if "Society" chose to reduce the taverns of the village from forty to ten, why "Society" had a very reliable ally in the rising lights of the law.

The Judge took a day to make up his decisions. On Wednesday we all gathered in the court-room

again, and the announcement made was fairly dramatic. He said that the evidence which had been volunteered, that there ought not to be any such establishments as he was directed to license, did not seem to him to be pertinent to the occasion, however interesting in itself. He said that his duty was rather functional, or *quasi*-executive; it was one of a class of undefined duties which from the days of the English practice devolved on the circuit courts, or their judges, because then judges were magistrates, supposed to be well known in the community. But it was not a duty of strictly judicial character. Then he read the statute, and said that his duty was clear: he must appoint one sober, intelligent, and discreet person for every ward in Bromwich, who should receive the license of the State for selling liquors as a victualler or taverner, if he gave the requisite bonds. He might appoint more at his discretion. But he had no discretion to refuse to appoint any. It was not necessary for him to appoint people because they asked. But the presumption was in favor of persons who publicly asked, if, after as full canvass of the facts as had evidently been made here, no testimony appeared against them.

After this preface, he said he should appoint one — and but one — victualler to act as taverner in each ward. The duty of selection was not difficult, he said, in most cases. And he read a list of eight persons who had applied for licenses, and against whom, he said, no charges of serious

import had been sustained. In the other four wards he had been obliged to select himself. He found that in three of them there were apothecaries who held apothecaries' licenses already. They could not act as taverners; but he should consider the purpose of the law fulfilled, if he gave to them victuallers' licenses.

"As for Ward III.," he said, "I find no name. Mr. Clerk, have you a list, or has any person in Court a list of the storekeepers in Ward III.?"

A reporter of the "Republic" handed to his honor the "Business Directory" of Bromwich, with the page turned down at Ward III.

The truth was that the division of Bromwich into twelve wards was an absurdity, only made that we might have twelve aldermen; and why we had twelve aldermen "no feller could find out."

The judge looked along the short list of stores and shops.

"There is no apothecary in this ward," said he, "and no grocer. Every saloon in it has been shown to be hopelessly corrupt, and a scandal to the borough. There is only this little gore," he said, "which comes into the trading part of the town.

"Yet I must appoint one discreet, sober and intelligent person here with a victualler's license." And he paused a minute, scanning the book again.

Then he laid it down with some feeling: the court-house was hushed.

"Mr. Clerk, appoint Emeline Meiers, widow of the late Axel Meiers. I understand she continues his business at the same stand. She ought to be discreet in this matter. Send a note to her to say that, if she will give bonds for this business, which the State regards as so necessary, she will be approved by this court."

The people who heard that decision went home to discuss the matter with quite clear light as to what the notions of the Judge were.

"And now we have done with this for a year," said he.

"Mr. Clerk, call the docket."

CHAPTER IX

WALKING AND TALKING

THE reduction of the number of our saloons and drinking-places from fifty-one to eight would have been in itself a revolution, had it really happened. But, of course, such things do not come out in fact as they do on paper. We do not have any police in Bromwich, and it would not have made any difference if we had. Still the forty-three suspended people had to conduct their business much more cautiously than they did before. The "Sons of Pythias" swore that they would prosecute every man of them who had a sign up; and, indeed, a good many of them folded their tents, and went to

parts unknown. My uncle, Dr. Claridge, said to Aunt Lois that she must not expect much more from the courts or from the law than they had gained. He said that his only object was to keep temptation out of the way of the college boys, of his own sons, and of the young shopkeepers and mechanics who had not contracted a passion for liquor. As for those who had, he said, like John Corkery or like Edward Felton, anybody who loved them must begin at the other end. And, unless somebody loved them, he said there was no help for them.

Anyway, we got quiet Sundays. All influential parties were at one there. The manufacturers did not want any black Mondays, the railroad people did n't want their hands off on sprees, and those "victuallers" and "taverners" who had escaped as by fire did not mean to risk such an ordeal as that in which poor John Brosnihan had gone under. So our Sundays, in these pleasant autumn days, took on almost a foreign air. You would see the German and Irish workmen in their best, with their smart wives and their toddling little ones, scattered along in groups all the way out on the tow-path of the canal. I will not swear but you might have found boys playing base-ball in the afternoon, if you had walked out to the Feeder.

Bertha Oelrich, who was a stout walker, was walking home one Sunday afternoon after the Sunday school, when, as she passed the Hazards, she met Mr. George Ruther. They were very

good friends now, and he said very frankly how glad he was to see her. Then he asked if he might turn and walk with her, if, as he supposed, she were going home.

Bertha invited him cordially to join her, and they walked briskly and gayly on, in full enjoyment of the lovely day.

For the reader is begged to understand that, though little else has been said of anything in Bromwich but the fortunes of "Our New Crusade," many other things were said and done there all this time. The sun rose and set, smokes curled up in peaceful skies in the morning and intimated that there were griddles, beefsteaks, and coffee below. The corn ripened, and the pumpkins took on the hue of gold. The girls pressed maple-leaves and ferns; and girls and men talked of ten thousand things besides licenses and Sunday sales. It is only that in the history of "Our New Crusade" comparatively little space can be given even to the most important of these things. It might, for instance, be taken for granted by the author that the reader will understand that the sun rose and set, and also that young men walked briskly and gayly, when on matchless Sunday afternoons they found themselves in company with true and brave and beautiful young girls.

So George Ruther walked with Bertha Oelrich, and talked of this and of that: of his residence in Russia; of the winter she spent in Altenberg; of the good English of the Russian gentlemen; of

her difficulties in following the German play, of the way in which she learned German over again from her father's relatives, whom she was visiting; of his odd blunders when he tried to talk Russian, and so on. And thus he was led, not unnaturally, to speak of the pleasant Saturday afternoons they had at his house, as Will Gadsden met them for their German lesson there.

"Everybody takes part on Saturday, whatever it is on other days. Even my little Ralph has learned to kiss his 'theurer Oheim' with a 'guten Abend,' when he goes to bed."

"I really think you ought to enlarge your class, Mr. Ruther," said Bertha, a little off her guard.

"I tell Gadsden that he is too good a teacher to be wasted. The truth is he was in excellent hands at Halle, and then he has the gift of teaching, and the gift of tongues too.

"Indeed, I know very few gifts he has not," added Ruther, after the longest pause since they had joined each other.

"Mr. Ruther, we are thinking of the same thing. Do you think he has the gift of all gifts, on which everything depends for him. Do you think he will hold on?"

"God only knows that," said he, reverently. "Indeed, that is what dear Will would say himself. He would say that he could do nothing without help. But I will say that I am absolutely sure of him. I am as sure of him as I am of myself; yet I do not know what this temptation is,

I cannot conceive of it. No merit of mine; but he was born with this fire in his veins! Oh, dear! how I wish that about the third and fourth generation were not true; but it is horribly true, alas! and he, poor boy, is fighting his grandfather's devils, as perhaps he, poor soul, fought his.

"To go back, I am more sure of him than I am of myself. I look on him as I might look on the figure in Daniel's vision, treading unscathed on coals of fire!"

And the tears fairly stood in his eyes, as he turned to speak to her. Bertha, too, was very much affected, — so much so that she said what she was sorry for a moment after : —

"Do you know I feel the same about her? I told my mother, last night, that I look on her as Dante looked on Beatrice. Why, she was counting stitches in some knitting for me yesterday, and I longed to say to her, 'Susie, you are an angel.' And he never speaks to her, he never even goes there. And she never even breathes his name."

"I thank you a thousand times," said George Ruther, "for being willing to allude to her." And then, with all his own tact and delicacy, he added, "And you shall never regret your confidence. I will not — I hope I need not say I will not — let him dream that you have spoken to me of her. You see I have only guessed; that is, you know I am a stranger here. But I knew, I could see what a noble creature she is; and perhaps I know

better than most men could know that he is very worthy of a most noble woman's confidence and love."

"I am so glad you say so," said Bertha, — "so glad. It is a comfort to know and feel this, though, of course, I cannot lift a finger nor say a syllable, though I am the dearest and nearest friend she has; and, indeed, I love her, Mr. Ruther, as never woman loved woman, I believe."

She was half-laughing and half-crying as she spoke. But she turned to him, and smiled bravely upon him through her tears, because she was so proud to be the friend of such a woman as Susie Claridge.

And he, — he was proud to be the friend of such a man as Will Gadsden, and to testify to somebody of what Will was and could be.

Yes; and both of these young people were proud and happy, because they had for once talked of the eternal realities with each other. There are but a few great words, and of those few they had spoken one or two. There are but three realities which never die: they had alluded to them all, in what they had said of Will Gadsden and Susie Claridge, who seemed so fatally parted.

These three realities are, —

FAITH, HOPE, LOVE.

They were written in other language on the faces of Bertha's locket.

They were the inspiration of the four mottoes of George Ruther's "we."

CHAPTER X

PHI NU

MEANWHILE Horace Gregg and Frank Gregg had their troubles although the license granted to the Deritend, perforce, had seemed to establish that house quite above the heads of all other institutions of its kind.

Thirty days is long to the schoolboy awaiting his vacation. It is long to the lover waiting the wedding-day. But it is very short, alas! to the poor deluded wretch who has put his name to a promise to pay, which is to come due in thirty days. It is shorter yet, when, as in the case of these young men, somebody else who can speak for them has put his name to the note, and they have not had the privileges and immunities, whatever they may be, which the note secures.

Thirty days were grinding by with pitiless rapidity. Hearing of coroners' inquests, hearing of license petitions, Indian summer, everything else, agreeable and disagreeable, seemed only to hurry forward these hated thirty days.

Yet at the end of these thirty days the note of the firm "Charles Gregg and Sons" must be paid at a Pittsburg bank. And thus far the only poor "asset," which had not been spent within the week in which it came in, was the claim of the firm upon the bankrupt estate of Axel Meiers

"for two months' board, self and family," and for several "sundries," conspicuous among which were "eleven bottles Cliquot champagne in own room."

"I wish I did not feel so angry about it," said Horace to Frank one day, as they spoke with each other in the private office. "I cannot bring my mind to it, as I should to an account for flour or oats or hay. Five hundred dollars, more or less, as he says, will not make us or break us. But, if he means ever to get us into such a scrape again, we are broken already."

"You know?" — said Frank, with hesitation. And Horace would not let him finish the question.

"Oh, yes! I know, I know only too well, — it is that which makes me so angry, — that I am expected to stay downstairs here on the night of Thursday, while a hundred and fifty poor boys and their friends get half-fuddled upstairs, and that I am to be praying God that they may take off my hands a hundred and twenty bottles of unsalable wine, so that I may meet my honest debts next morning! It is too bad, and I cannot stand it."

What he meant was that on that Thursday there was to be a great Anniversary of the Phi Nu Society, and the supper had been ordered by the Local Committee at the Deritend House. Whenever Horace warned his father that something must be done about this miserable five hundred dollar note, as well as about forty other claims which

hung over the firm, the fatuous man always said, "Oh? after the Phi Nu we shall be in clover," or "After the Phi Nu we can settle everything." Horace had gone out from the office in disgust a dozen times, because he had heard his father put off one or another butcher or farmer, or even egg-woman, by saying, "If you had as lief wait till the fifteenth. We have some money coming in on the fourteenth, and we can pay you then."

Men of the type of fool to which Mr. Charles Gregg belongs invariably regard a fixed sum of money which is in the future as being applicable to as many purposes at the same time as they may need to use it for. The same six hundred dollars due him would, in any event, be made by Mr. Gregg's imagination to pay ten separate debts of five hundred dollars hanging over him. And thus it was with perfectly good faith that he assured one and another creditor, pressing him for payment of honest dues, that on the fourteenth he should have some money.

Horace and Frank were not fools. They were men of business; and they knew, to a cent, what they had to do, and to an hour when they had to do it. Things were not going well with the Deritend House, but the young men were prudent and sensible. Frank was carrying on his stables with the lowest conceivable expenditure, and he said to Horace that he did not dare tell him how small were the stocks of grain he kept in hand. But for all their prudence and care it was none the less

true that luck seemed to go against them. That whole story of Meiers's death had gone into all the papers, and the house had been unfortunately advertised by it far and near. Since that happened, travellers who knew nothing of Bromwich had been very apt to take the Northern coach instead of the Deritend, at the station, when they wished to go to a hotel. So the "transient" receipts fell off. One or two of the most reliable families of "boarders" had made some excuse to leave. And so Frank and Horace knew, more than they had ever known, the difficulty of keeping their expenditures anywhere near a cash level. Meanwhile here was this fussy, shiftless father complicating everything, and leaving them with all the responsibility, while they had only half the control.

Before this Thursday came, of which he said so much, and from which he hoped so much, he had a dozen opportunities to confound the best plans of the young men, whom he chose always to call the boys, and to overlook, while he rested upon them entirely.

Thus, Frank had been in the habit of buying hay of an old German farmer, who lived in the valley four or five miles above us. The account had run on unadjusted rather longer than Frank liked; but as matters went, as he knew old Otterbein was their friend, he told him frankly that he wanted to buy twenty tons more of hay, but he would rather meet the payment for the whole after Christmas. He proposed what pleased the old

man perfectly, to give to him the firm's note, due on the 4th of January, for the whole sum.

The old man was entirely satisfied; came down himself with the last grand procession of his teams, and, when the last blade of hay was delivered, walked round into the house well pleased, to announce that it was there. Perhaps he expected that Horace or Frank would ask him to stop and dine, as indeed they would, had they been there.

Instead of Horace or Frank, he found their father; and, by misfortune, found him in one of his most pompous moods. He was talking grand to a General Wardour who had strayed into the hotel reading-room, and who was expected to be Governor of Iowa or Colorado or Utah, Mr. Gregg hardly knew which.

With company so grand, he could hardly recognize Mr. Otterbein.

But when the good old farmer at last compelled him to be aware of his presence, he said, in his most jaunty and condescending air, —

"O Hans, is it you? Come about some hay? Well, wait a little while, and Frank will see to you.

"I was saying, General, that if the country understood that when gold ranges higher than fifty per cent above the cost of paper — "

"Ef you would dake care of your own gold and your own paper, id would be pedder vor you."

This ejaculation from the indignant hay-master arrested the political economy, and called forth

the ill-concealed laughter of all the lazy dogs who were wasting the morning in the reading-room.

Mr. Gregg became more patronizing than ever.

"Well, Hans, what's the matter?" said he, just winking to the General, in a very noticeable aside. "When did you begin to study finance?"

"Mebbe I know wot I say, mebbe I don't know. Here I pe, for my money, or for the note of hand Mr. Frank — that's your poy — promise me."

Mr. Gregg was not usually indisposed to give notes of hand to any one who was fool enough to take them; but he was in the vein of showing off to the General. He knew nothing of Otterbein's account, and knew he knew nothing of it, and, in short, he wanted to get rid of him.

"Don't be a fool, Hans — don't be a fool! Come for your money any time but now. Don't you see I'm busy? General, step into the parlor with me, and let me open a bottle of our genuine Henry Clay. You don't see such wine every day!" So he actually turned his back on old Otterbein, who, though he was in overalls and smock, expected, with some reason, to be treated with some consideration.

The idlers in the reading-room watched the scene, and snickered aloud.

This did not improve the old man's temper. "Mebbe he's too good for me to talk to. I'm not too good to pring hay to his parn, nor oats to his horses. Tam fool! I could puy him and sell him, and I suppose I petter pegin!"

It was true enough that the comfortable old fellow could have bought and sold the Deritend House, ten times over, had he chosen. And he was the man whom Mr. Gregg had chosen to insult in company.

He crossed to the county bank in a rage, and went up to the cashier, who was always very friendly to him.

"Tell me some goot lawyer, Mr. Newland, some man tat will not cheat me. This blackguard Gregg will pay me no money, and laughs when I ask him."

Mr. Newland really tried to soothe him, but without avail. The old man did not make his story very clear, but Newland knew him well enough to know that the foundation must be sure. He must have dunned Gregg for money, that Gregg could not or would not pay. And Otterbein was very patient with people who owed him. Mr. Newland had to name a lawyer, and the old man left him, vowing that he would have an officer in the house before the week was over.

Now it was at this same county bank that within half an hour Horace had offered for discount the note of Gregg & Sons, knowing, that by some such relief he must be prepared to meet his father's rash obligation at Pittsburg. The cashier meant to discount the note, though he did not fancy it much, but he really wanted to oblige. The president would be in the next day, and he would let Horace know.

This was the man to whom at this moment was brought the intelligence that the Deritend could not pay an honest bill for hay, and insulted such a man as Hans Otterbein.

When Horace came in the next day for his money, Mr. Newland told him that he found they had passed their line of discounts, that the president was very firm, and that he could not discount his note.

This is the sort of mischief which can be done by a fool.

"Who cares for old Hans?" said the befooled Mr. Gregg on Thursday morning, in the midst of the preparation for the great Phi Nu supper. An intimation had come in that, unless immediate payment of his account was made, an officer would be placed in the house the next day. "Who cares for old Hans? Why, we shall net from this very supper more than the whole amount of his dirty bill!"

This boast was addressed to Frank, who knew only too well what this extra game and confectionery was costing; how much he was to pay for the servants he was obliged to hire for this feast, and who at that moment was beside himself for current money to meet even its accidental expenses. He knew also why Horace did not hear the speech. It was because Horace was here and there and everywhere, trying to rake together what must be brought together for the payment, absolutely essential, of the

next day, when his father's fatal wine-note must be provided for at Pittsburg.

"Your wine-money is always cash down," continued the prating father, perfectly conscious of the cause of Frank's uneasiness. "Not a man of them leaves this house to-night without settling for his little wine card. There 's five or six hundred good dollars for you, alone, Master Francis. No waiting for your bill to be audited, or such nonsense."

"Ferguson has not made me wait much for to-night's bill," said Frank, sadly. "He has paid me very handsomely on account, already. I don't know where his supper would be, had he failed to." Then he paused, before he said, "Are you really hoping that these boys are going to order two hundred bottles of champagne? There will not be a hundred and sixty of them here."

"Oh, don't be critical, Frank. What 's a dozen more or less? I mean we shall all be in clover to-morrow morning!"

The Phi Nu was a literary society with branches in forty or fifty colleges in the Middle, Western, and Southern States. The conventions were held in turn at different colleges, and were occasions of great interest among college students and their friends. This year it came to Bromwich, for the first time. The "Local Committee" of our own Bromwich College was on tenter-hooks of anxiety, lest the reception and entertainment should not be equal to that which the convention had received at

Lexington, at Charlottesville, at the Ohio Oxford and the Ohio Athens. We had the Mozart Band from Philadelphia, for the music, at a fabulous expense. And Ferguson had, in truth, met Horace and Frank Gregg more than-half way, and had provided for the supper so generously that they might re-enforce the Deritend where it was weak, and be able to meet the tastes of delegates who knew personally of the elegancies of entertainment of the St. Charles at New Orleans, and the St. Nicholas, which was then famous, in New York.

And the young men were happy in what our Local Committee did not arrange, — the choice of orator and poet. I was tempted to call the orator "Fisher Ames," that I might rightly give an impression of the reputation he brought with him, though that was not, and is not, his name. His name was and is Benjamin Brannan, and at the time of our story, he was just earning a reputation among all thoughtful young men for ripe and pure oratory. It is now years since, that Brannan with his nearest friends left this world together. For poet, we had William Ramsdell, just then ordained. Long since he has given up the writing of verses, in the more attractive work of the writing of sermons. But I have never known one audience laugh and weep as did our audience that night as he read his poem.

But it is not my business to report the poem or the oration. A long procession filled and overfilled

the church. The music was exquisite; the oration was a noble appeal to a body of fine young men, and it almost brought them to their feet, once and again in the ecstasy of their enthusiasm and applause. Of the poem I have spoken. Then a song sung by the Phi Nu delegates, and then a procession to the Deritend.

I am not a Phi Nu myself. But by a great favor, because Ramsdell was staying at Dr. Claridge's house, I was squeezed in at the supper, with many vows of secrecy, if I should there learn any of the secrets of the order. Be at ease, secretaries and ex-secretaries, for I learned not one. There were fully a hundred and fifty young men there, — half of them from our college, half of them delegates. They were jolly, not noisy; but now and then some capital joke, at one or another point of the horse-shoe tables, brought out a scream and shout of laughter which, for the moment, drowned all talk. Then we would all begin again.

The president of the evening was a Philadelphia millionnaire, who remembered Bromwich and Phi Nu, and had been well pleased to knit together again his remembrances of his college days. At his right hand was Ramsdell, at his left was Brannan, and Ferguson next to him. I sat near enough to Ferguson to hear all these magnates said.

So soon as we had finished our game, Mr. Charles Gregg himself, with quite a flourish, handed to the president an elegant wine-card,

which had been printed for the occasion, with the monogram of Phi Nu at the top. Similar cards had been passed all down the table.

Mr. Wister handed it to Brannan, and asked him what he should order. "Let my order go for us all three," he said, with a smile.

Brannan paused a moment, seemed to think he must speak quickly, if he spoke at all, and then said, "Really, Mr. Wister, I do not usually drink wine after ten o'clock at night. I am sure these boys do not, or ought not, if they do. Now they will want to do what gentlemen older than themselves do, and they will be very much governed by what you and I do. I do not care for doing good for example's sake. But I should certainly rather set the example of the habit of my life at home."

"God bless you, my dear fellow," said the impetuous man, "you're wholly right. Why did I not see this myself?" And he sprang to his feet.

"Brethren of Phi Nu! I propose our first toast a little early, — 'Eternity to Phi Nu!' And I wish to make a proposal.

"I propose that we drink it in cold water. I shall, and I hope you will. I do not say I am a teetotaller; but I do say that I was one when I was in good old Bromwich, — God bless her! — and that, if I had not been, I should not be here to-night. I do not want to have Dr. Witherspoon miss a man of us from morning prayers.

"Now every man is free here to order any wine he chooses, and I see some excellent wines named on the bill; but I want Phi Nu's health drunk in water. And I just propose that we drink all the toasts that follow in the same way!"

He certainly surprised his audience. But he did not speak to an unsympathizing crowd. Phi Nu always had the best scholars in the colleges, men who knew it was best to keep their heads cool. Our own representation was of men and boys who drank very little, if anything, beside water. Still no one had wanted to seem mean to guests from a distance; and the guests from a distance did not want to seem mean to their hosts. And I know, for one, that I should have ordered my bottle of champagne or of sherry, simply that Bromwich might give as elegant an entertainment as Cleveland gave last year.

But here was Mr. Wister — a man who could buy wine in all the markets of the world, if he chose, — a man who had bridged the Youghehagany, and had sent fleets to the Antipodes — coolly intimating that he thought it was rather the best breeding not to take any wine at all!

The courage of the proposal pleased some men. The proposal itself pleased others. Tom Davis hopped up, and said, "Amen! three cheers for the president," — which were given.

And then they drank "Eternity to Phi Nu" in water, and there was not a drop of wine opened at that supper party that evening. I am not sure

but the fashion was set for Phi Nu to the present day.

And by such a misfortune ended Mr. Gregg's well-founded hopes of paying for his wine purchase by the Phi Nu's supper!

CHAPTER XI

WORD TO PITTSBURG

"WHATEVER else happens, Horace, you must and shall go to bed."

This was what Frank said to Horace after the last of the young fellows had gone home at three o'clock Friday morning.

"Go to bed with a note protested at Pittsburg before sundown! Much good will the bed do to me!"

This was Horace's reply.

Their father had taken his candle to go to bed hours before.

But Frank had his way. Somehow, Frank always did have his way with Horace. And at four o'clock in the morning silence reigned over the Deritend.

But at five the early passengers were called. At half-past five the early breakfasts were ready. At half-past six the gong rang. At seven the regular breakfast began to be served to all comers till ten, just as if the house had not been in an

uproar the night before, and just as if that fated note were not going to protest at Pittsburg, for all Horace's skill to prevent it.

And every one was at his place or her place, — Mrs. Gregg at the ladies' table, Horace in the office, Frank in the store-room, — just as if disgrace were not immediate and ruin impending.

Fanny Gregg was perhaps a minute earlier than her wont at breakfast. Bernard and I had spent what was left of the night at the hotel, that we might not disturb the Doctor's household. As we passed her to our seats at breakfast, we both bowed; and she bowed, and tried to smile. But clearly it was an effort. Her face was intolerably sad.

Bernard said very little; did not choose to go back over the Phi Nu supper, as Gadsden, who was sitting by us, tried to make him; and the moment Miss Fanny left the table, which she did in a few minutes, Bernard went after her, leaving his breakfast untouched, for it had only just been brought, in answer to his order.

"What is that?" said I to Gadsden, fairly surprised. "Does he know her as well as that?"

"He is very often here," said Will, "and I have often seen them together. Any man might be proud of knowing as noble a girl as that is. This house," continued Will, "is a problem to me. It seems to me hell, sometimes, when I think of what I have seen in the bar-room here, or of that wretched Mrs. Meiers's suffering. But

when I see the loyalty of those two girls to their mother and their brothers, — nay, when I see the way Horace and Frank, as we all call them, carry each other's weights — it seems to me a part of the kingdom of heaven.

"They do have a hard row to hoe, — to make a place decent and respectable, which stands on the foundation of that room downstairs.

"I never look at Horace Gregg," he added in a minute, "without thinking of Hamlet. The world is out of joint for poor Horace, and it is a cursed spite that so fine a fellow as he should be out of his place in righting it."

"How well they both behaved last evening!"

"Did not they? Gentlemen through the whole, not above their business, not a hair's breadth below it. If they had any weight to carry, one did not see it."

"Yet where that fool, their father, is, there must be weights to carry."

At this moment Bernard Claridge came running back. "Fellows, come here," he said, — "come into the office with me."

The private office was an inner mystery to me. I had passed its door often, but never entered it before. We hurried across the dining-room with Bernard, as he begged us. In the private office we found Horace and Frank.

"It is worse than I said, Claridge," said Horace, sadly. "I told you that there were four fifties in the safe. There were last night in

this pocket-book. To-day the pocket-book is empty!"

This he had discovered while Bernard was crossing the dining-room.

"In short," said Bernard, eagerly, "this firm has a note of five hundred dollars, to be paid this day at the First National. To pay it with, they had these two hundred dollars, and these are gone!

"Is it Garnet?" asked Gadsden. Garnet was the office clerk.

"I wish I did not think so. I have sent to his room."

"Mr. Garnet is in bed, sare. But he will be down instantly."

"Then it is not Garnet. It is — it must be — Oh, my God! it must be my father!"

A father stealing from himself, and from his own sons!

Frank had run out of the office, had found his mother, and with her went to his father's bedroom.

While we were all yet excited and confused, he returned, his face white as death, and his eyes swimming with tears.

He whispered to Horace, while we three looked at the "Eagle," at the framed diploma on the wall, or out of the window.

Then there was a dead silence.

"It is too true," said Horace then, and he said it very sadly. "After he found last night that —

that — that he should not sell his wine, this poor man — took this — took these wretched bills across to Norris's, — you know, I suppose, they play there every night, — and he played, and he played, till it was all gone!

"I cannot ask you to feel sorry for him, fellows; but I do, indeed I do."

Then for a minute no one said anything more.

For me, I was wondering how we all came to be there; why this proud Horace, usually so reserved, had asked us all three into this private office, to a story of family shame; or, indeed, what was the story we had been called to hear? For this loss of the money was as much a surprise to my cousin Bernard as to me.

Bernard undertook to explain. Will, with his head as clear as always, helped everything forward by one or two bold inductive conjectures.

The truth was that Bernard had followed Fanny, and had insisted on speaking to her. She was in tears, as he thought she was. And — though Bernard did not tell us this then, we knew it afterward — Fanny trusted him, and believed him, yes, and began to wish she might rest on him, as one day she would have said she could only rest on Horace. And Bernard had soothed her, poor girl, and had sympathized with her, as she sat by him in the ladies' parlor, till at last she could keep her secret no longer, and she had told him that Horace was beside himself because that day they should be disgraced. The

firm's note would go to protest, he had told her, and they would all be bankrupt to-morrow.

Not all of this, but enough of it, Bernard told to us in the private office.

"It is hard," said poor Horace, "after the fight we have made for it, to have it all come to an end so suddenly and so soon. And I cannot help saying still, that the cause is very small!"

Then the poor fellow turned away, as if he were resolved that he would not break down, and that nothing should make him shed a tear.

"We ought to say, however," said Frank Gregg, "that it is not this one note alone. Everything is against us. Old Mr. Otterbein, whom I thought our friend, swears he will have an officer in the house to-morrow. That will frighten away boarders, the transient company has stopped already. Our quarter's rent is due on the first. That is the heaviest single bill we pay. Taxes, as you all know, must be paid before December. And, indeed, you know how many forgotten claims appear the moment there is a screw loose anywhere."

"But I called you two in," cried Bernard, eagerly, "that there need not be a screw loose anywhere. I don't see that this thing need go beyond us five in this room. I have two hundred and twenty-three dollars, which may go to Pittsburg as soon as the telegraph can take it. Just now he had two hundred more in that pocket-book," this the poor fellow said with a sorry face,

"and I knew you two would go seventy-seven if you could. That 's what I called you for."

"Of course we would," said Will, "I can go more than that. I have one hundred and eleven dollars in the bank now. Horace, I 'll pay you twenty-two weeks' board in advance," and he laughed. Horace did not laugh. No, his eyes did fill with tears, after all. For Gadsden had never called him "Horace," — no, not for near three years, not since the old black times!

For me, I could offer nothing. The term was nearly ended, and I had not five dollars in the world. At that time in my life, indeed, I had never but once had thirty dollars I could call my own.

Will Gadsden was writing on a card. In his quick way he poked his head out of a little slide. "Sam, go saddle the white mare. Take this card to Mr. George Ruther. Tell him to ride her back, and come afoot yourself."

"I beg your pardon," said he to Frank, laughing again, "for anticipating your orders. But Ruther will understand that this is a time, if any, to 'Lend a hand.'"

Ruther did understand it. He was with us in ten minutes. Before an hour was over, four of us were in separate wagons from the stable, and the other two out on foot. We were carrying out the necessary details of a quick morning's work, in which each man of the six was bearing his brother's burthens. I, of all people in the world,

was sent out to Hans Otterbein. I talked to him, explained to him, soothed him, and ended in persuading him to take the boys' note of hand, assuring him that the father should leave the firm before midnight. George Ruther waited on Mr. Newland at the County Bank, put his own name on the back of the faulty note; and then it proved that, although the discount line was overstepped, it could be, just for once, overstepped a little more. Bernard went up to see Ferguson, — who was entirely reliable, — and came back at noon with two hundred and ten dollars, the balance of the supper account, which Horace would have died before he would dun for. Frank was closeted with Wayland, drawing up an instrument, by which Mr. Charles Gregg left the firm, as we hoped, for ever. Then George Ruther took Horace up to a state interview with Gustav Oelrich, whose interest George thought necessary with the proprietors of the Deritend.

As they went, they stopped at the telegraph-office to leave this despatch, which they had consented to carry so far for Mr. Newland: —

BROMWICH, 10 A. M.

To First National Bank, Pittsburg:

Please take up note of Gregg & Sons for five hundred on our account. JAPHET NEWLAND.

"You can do a good deal in a forenoon," said George to Horace, as he bade him good-by, "when every one is willing to —

"'LEND A HAND.'"

How strange it seems now to think that those two fine fellows had never spoken to each other when that day began!

CHAPTER XII

THE DERITEND CLUB

THIS was a good day's work already.

But George Ruther had a good deal of the Lockhard in him; and he liked to drive a bolt home, as much as the Lockhard liked to drive a dirk home.

He "made sicker" when there was a chance, on the "same afternoon."[1] And that afternoon he asked Horace to lend him the white mare in a wagon, that he might take Will Gadsden out to see Mrs. Oelrich. He had seen her husband at the counting-house in the morning. To borrow the white mare of Horace Gregg was just a part of Ruther's thoughtfulness. It was a drop of relief to Horace to feel that he, too, could be of service to somebody.

[1] "The same afternoon" was a phrase I caught from the late General Mitchell, the founder of the Cincinnati Observatory. He was a most energetic person, apt to carry through what he began upon. Much of the secret of his success might be found in the frequency with which his accounts of his movements ended with this phrase, "I did"— so and so — "on the *same afternoon.*"

I do not pretend but George Ruther was glad of the possible chance of seeing Bertha Oelrich as well. I do pretend that he did not go on purpose to see her.

He went to tell Mrs. Oelrich that the chances were more favorable for the "Deritend Club."

Fortune favors the brave; and the two young men found Bertha and her mother both at home. The afternoon was lovely. The golden light streamed into the conservatory, which was just now filled for the winter. There were few flowers, but there was much brilliant green. The parlor at the Oelrichs' is large and high and cheerful. The pictures are hung low, the bookcases have no glass, the easels and lolling-chairs are never twice quite in the same place; the carpet is thick, and badly faded by the perpetual sun; and, in short, you have everything — but a "hornet's nest" — to make you comfortable. In two minutes the two young men and the two ladies were in full talk. I might say the two young ladies, for Mrs. Oelrich seems as young as her daughter.

"I thought my revolution in society was as dead as a French revolution," said she.

"Oh! they never go backwards, you know," said Mr. Ruther. "It was 'truth crushed to earth.'"

"I suppose we did not start right, mamma," said Bertha.

"My dear child, we never started at all. That was the misfortune." And Mrs. Oelrich laughed heartily.

"No," said Ruther, "you never started; but

your plan was right, as ours was wrong, and I took a leaf out of your book instantly."

"Thank you, Mr. Ruther, thank you. I like to talk to such people. You and I will talk together, and let Will and Bertha talk to each other." This from Mrs. Oelrich, who then added, "Please what was the leaf, and what was the invention? Now, that they do not hear, you might confide my own secret to me."

"Why, you let the women come to your club with the men. We have now opened a regular tea-room, under John Corkery's supervision, where we serve out the strongest green tea at a cent a cup, another cent for milk and another for sugar. We encourage the lumpers and the diggers to bring round their wives to gossip in the tea-room while they smoke in the reading-room. I do not mean that all the women do it every night; but once or twice a week Betsy Flanagan or Bridget O'Toole comes round with her clean cap on, and takes what the Cheshire people call an 'outing.' There is nothing out-of-the-way when a young fellow, walking with his sweetheart, looks in to show her a funny picture in 'Frank Leslie' or in 'Harper.' I should like to have you see the blaze of chrysanthemums and prince's-feathers and maple-leaves that John Corkery's rooms are in, which real working-women have brought in, bring in every afternoon. For those women understand very well what we are after, and they know what it is to overcome evil with good."

"Well, was that in my plan?"

"Why, of course it was. Your plan, stated in theory, is this: You substitute cheerful and animated society of both sexes for the society which exists in bar-rooms where only one sex meets; and for the society which exists in sewing-circles, where, also, only one sex meets. Now, in human life, boys and girls, and men and women, fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, like to go together, and be together."

"I thank you very heartily for making me out a philosopher," said Mrs. Oelrich. "I will make you my best courtesy when I stand up. But really I had no theory. I only remembered the 'Clarendon Club,' and thought it a shame that men should have such comforts wholly to themselves."

"Permit me," said George Ruther, laughing. "With the instinct of your sex, you saw the great void in the social life of the higher classes of American villages, and you filled it. How will that do? We could send that to the 'Journal of Intellectual Philosophy.'"

"I fall back on the sad fact that my poor club never so much as existed. We never even came to its name. That hateful 'Eagle' announced that the women were defied: and the club ceased to be."

"But you see," said Ruther, "it has come to life again. It was born in the back office of the Deritend, when Bernard Claridge 'looked forward, and not back,' and 'looked out, and not in.'

"If you come to that," Will said, — for Will and Bertha were listening now, — "I think it was when Fanny Gregg told Bernard Claridge what the matter was!"

"Bernard Claridge and Fanny Gregg!" cried Bertha. "Why have I never seen that? So you had to get a woman to help you in all your grand plans; and a very nice and charming woman you had too."

"I never should have spoken those words," said Will. "And I am really very sorry."

"Trust me," said the bright girl. "But, Mr. Gadsden, I thought it was only women who let out secrets."

"But I am not sure that I can claim the club as mine," said Mrs. Oelrich, "if it has all these god-fathers and god-mothers."

"I wish you would talk of the club," cried Bertha. "You pretended that was what you came for; and now you talk of nothing but pretty girls and nice young men, just as if you were taking tea with Miss Hepzibah Traddles. I don't see but men are as bad as women are.

"Please talk about the club, Mr. Ruther," and she stroked the front breadths of her frock, and laid both her hands on them primly, as if she were to be lectured.

Mr. Ruther laughed this time. "We came up to make you talk about it. Perhaps Mr. Gadsden has been telling you what I have been telling your mother, that this would be a good time to

begin; a good time for what Lord George Germain called 'solid operations.'

"I think," said he, "that Horace and Frank Gregg are ready for any change. They are ready to sell out, if we say so. But it would be much better to have them stay in. 'Stay-inners are of much more use in this world than come-outers,' Miss Bertha. That is a *bon-mot* of this Andrew, who was governor of Massachusetts."

"I will commit it to memory," said Bertha, "and repeat it to mamma when she wants me to take a constitutional on a rainy day."

"I think this is a good time to begin. But I think also, as Will Gadsden here has said, — I believe that we had better not begin at all, unless we can begin in force. The Greggs showed their books to Mrs. Claridge. They have shown them to me to-day. The Deritend cannot live unless somebody, somehow, makes good the income of this bar, — that is to say, four thousand dollars a year. If we could make a club which could make that income good why Horace and Frank Gregg are only too eager to sweep that whole bar out."

"Four thousand dollars is a good deal of money, Mr. Ruther."

"It is a great deal of money, Mrs. Oelrich. It is money very cheerfully paid, and very easily collected, when it is paid for eleven o'clocks, and comforters and smashes and treats, for cocktails and juleps. But it would be money very hard to raise, in Bromwich or anywhere else, by a dead

lift, for a mere theory of philanthropy. We ought to raise it, as the Deritend bar raises it, by giving something for something."

"We must give," said she, "something that people like as much as they like juleps and smashes. Did you know, by the way, that they drank mint-juleps in Charles the First's time?"

"I knew the people in 'Comus' did," said he; and he quoted —

> "'And first behold this cordial julep here,
> That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
> With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.'"

"Then you want," said Will, "to collect your money steadily, — not by jerks, — like a subscription paper."

"I cannot see," said Bertha, "how they can sell four thousand dollars' worth of this horrid whisky."

"You would see," said Will, gravely, "if you bought it at a dollar a gallon and sold it at a dollar a quart. I think we must have two things at the club. We must have members with a regular subscription; and I hope this may not be high, for I hope the college boys will come. Then I hope that, when you and your mother want the fashionable afternoon tea, you will order it in the club parlor; when you want lunch in the village, you will order it there. And I hope that in the winter, when you have a sociable, it

will be under the club's auspices; and if you have private theatricals, they will be in the Deritend's ball-room."

"Mighty private," said Bertha.

"As private as they are in the college chapel," said Will; and Bertha owned herself vanquished.

George Ruther had been listening.

"I put all that very squarely to Horace Gregg to-day," he said. "And Gregg admits — he is very glad to admit — that the receipts of the house can be very considerably enlarged by all this sort of custom. He says it is not much, that people are unreasonable, and want to make hard bargains on such occasions. But if there were such a Deritend club as I described, and the officers really bore in mind that they were largely indebted to the house, — in short, that the house as an institution helped the club, as well as the club helped the house, — he owned that the occasional receipts of the house would be much enlarged."

"He said," cried the eager Will, "that he would risk the chance of these things making up half what the bar pays them. Your tea and coffee, Miss Bertha, your toast, Mrs. Oelrich, my sociable tickets and the parquet seats, we shall all buy when Mr. Ruther acts Othello. All these together will be worth two thousand dollars a year. Would you have thought that?"

"Well, mamma eats a great deal of toast when she has been driving in the cold. For me, I

never touch tea or coffee. Then we have only two thousand to see to."

"Yes," said Mr. Ruther; "but that must flow in as easily and readily as the rivers flow into the sea. There must be no hitch with begging, and fairs, and finance committees. So that we should calculate on three thousand, that we may have a margin with Mr. Newland."

"Why does that name Newland seem natural?"

"Japhet Newland was President of the Bank of England, and Marryat named a foundling after him."

"Oh! I knew I had seen it somewhere. By the way, I 'll make our Mr. Newland subscribe. I won't take no for an answer. But how will you fix the subscriptions?"

"I am glad you say there are to be no fairs," said Mrs. Oelrich. "I hate fairs."

"She hates them, and is all the time painting for them, and standing behind tables, and then buys half the things."

"My dear, that is one way I have of bearing my cross."

"There are worse things than fairs," said George Ruther. "They advertise a charity, and set everybody to thinking of it, and talking of it. Now a subscription paper is, or ought to be, modest, and to advertise nothing.

"But this Deritend club is not a charity. If it does not meet what Mrs. Oelrich will call a 'real void' in her Essay on American Society,

we do not want it to exist at all. So we do not need a fair for it. As it starts, it must go on; acquiring its means by its own merits."

"As I mean to acquire mine, Mr. Ruther," cried Bertha.

"As I am sure you will," cried Will, with real admiration, which he was fearless about expressing.

"Two thousand dollars," said Mrs. Oelrich, pensively; "or, better, three thousand dollars every year, and no fair."

"No! but a great many people interested," said Will, hopefully.

"And a void in American society, dear mamma. Do remember the words in your own essay."

"I remember it is time for you to have on your apron, and eat your bread and milk, and kiss papa and be sent to bed."

They all laughed, and Mrs. Oelrich said again, —

"Three thousand dollars a year."

"Which is," said George Ruther, "seven hundred and fifty dollars a quarter."

"What do you say to this?" added he.

"Could we not make three hundred people, say students, and school-teachers, and clerks in stores, and dress-makers, and other people that have no families, subscribe half a dollar a quarter? They would always find cheerful rooms. They would have fire, lights, newspapers, a chance to talk, and a chance to see people."

"And they would crowd your parlors so that they could not see the King of Siam, if he were there."

"Why, my dear Miss Bertha, they would not all be there at one time."

"Oh, no! I forgot. They would come at different times. I beg pardon."

"Then," continued George, "could we not get a hundred subscribers who would pay more, — say two dollars a quarter, or eight dollars a year, and have the management of the thing, choose the government, appoint the committees, and so on.

"And then I should propose yet another subscription of twenty-five dollars a year, for families. This subscription would introduce strangers, and all one's family, and so on. There would not be many of these subscribers, but all there were would help. I should take such a ticket; I have so many railroad men from a distance. Your husband would take one. Dr. Witherspoon would take one. Judge Ellery would take one. We should get twenty such subscribers."

"Twenty families," said Bertha, "are five hundred dollars. A hundred annuals are eight hundred dollars. Three hundred of the college-boy kind are six hundred dollars. Six and eight are fourteen and five are nineteen. Not enough, Mr. Ruther."

"No," he said rather abjectly, "I see it is not. And yet I had it come out quite grandly at twenty-four hundred. Perhaps I have missed

something. However, we will not go off in detail. In substance, this is my idea; and I do not believe that is the hard point. I think the hard point will be to make people come to it. In as slow a town as this, it will be five years before the people most interested in this thing will know of its existence. The thing to do is to compel them to find it out."

"Without advertising it," said Bertha, "without having a fair."

Mr. Ruther was good-natured, and owned his inconsistency; and they all fell to telling what the club should have, and what it should not have.

It should have two New York papers, two or three German picture papers, the "London Illustrated News" (remember all this was nine years ago). It should have "Harper's Weekly" and "Monthly," and "Frank Leslie." It should have the "Atlantic," and "Godey's Ladies' Book" ("Old and New" did not then exist). It should have all the leading religious papers, — the Pittsburg and Wheeling dailies, — our own local papers, of course.

"Do you mean to let them smoke, Mr. Ruther?" said Bertha.

"Do you mean to?" said he. "That is the real question."

"I vote for their smoking," said she, decidedly. "That is, there shall be a smoking-room, into which, of course, no woman will ever enter.

"There shall be a ladies' sanctum, into which, of course, no man shall ever enter.

"There shall be a parlor, as pretty as mamma knows how to make it, into which ladies and gentlemen shall both enter.

"There shall be a library, as cosy and convenient as you men know how to make, into which genltemen and ladies both shall enter. Then there shall be a coffee-room, where mamma will eat her toast, and I will sometimes order a grilled humming-bird's wing by way of encouraging the club."

Her father had come in while she was talking. When she stopped, he went on: —

"I think there had better be a blue satin armchair, with gold legs, on a slight daïs, and a canopy over it, of blue silk with tassels, for Miss Bertha Oelrich to sit upon."

"And another by its side, of dark crimson satin with the legs a little longer, for Mr. Gustav Oelrich to sit on, and keep his daughter in order." As Bertha said this, she jumped from her chair, kissed her father, made him sit in her place, and took her own upon his knee.

"Tell me all about this treason," said he.

And in much less time, and what the vernacular calls much shorter metre, than I could tell it in, Bertha told him.

Mr. Oelrich was interested through and through. But, from the first moment, he took a much broader and more fearless view of their plans than they had done.

"You see," said he, "you are going to work without capital. That is a mistake young women make, my dear," and he kissed her. "Now you must provide certain things, which are to remain, by your capital stock. As soon as you have any capital, the people who have subscribed it will want to get their money's worth, and they will follow the thing up, and believe in it, and come to meetings so as to show to themselves, and to other people too, that they have not thrown their money away. I shall do so. If you made me give you twenty-five dollars for my annual subscription, I should only laugh at you, and should never go into the club room. But when I have subscribed two or three hundred dollars, and have made Hans Otterbein do the same, and Judge Ellery and Mr. Newland, I shall be so afraid they will be disatisfied that I shall be smoking bad cigars and reading the 'Saturday Review' at the club all the time."

George Ruther was greatly interested. "Do not suppose that I did not think of this," said he.

"Yes, Mr. Ruther, you thought of it, but you did not dare. You saw what a drowsy place Bromwich is, and perhaps you thought it was as poor as it pretends to be. The truth is that there are twenty people here who have yet to learn the luxury of public spirit, — of doing something for other people while they do it for themselves. And this club of my little Bertha's will be an excellent place for them to break the ice."

"Mamma will be very jealous if you call it my club," said Bertha. "It is all her invention."

"I'll risk your mamma, my dear. I should like to inquire of you, who are, I believe, chief of staff at the Oelrich club, at what time tea is expected in that establishment."

But at that moment the tea-bell rang, and Mrs. Oelrich led the way to that entertainment which surpasses any banquet of Lucullus, the "high tea" of a good housekeeper on her mettle.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

"HAD Mr. Ruther sent the mare home before you went to bed, Frank?" This was Horace's question to his brother the next morning.

Frank laughed, and said that at quarter past eleven the mare and the wagon had not been heard from.

So much evidence was there that the young gentlemen in their visit at Mr. Oelrich's had had a "good time."

For, indeed, at tea-time, and once and again after tea, the talk had run back to the Deritend club; and, as one and another evening visitor came in, Mr. Gustav Oelrich had new opportunity for seeing how his larger plans would strike them. He talked more and more definitely, as he went

on. And, indeed, his knowledge of men, of affairs, and of Bromwich men and Bromwich affairs in particular, made his advice of much more worth than that of the younger men could be. By the time Mr. Ruther and Will proposed to retire, he was in full blast with paper before him, — schedules of purchases, drafts of a constitution, — and he called them back to discuss this detail, and that, and another, till it was, indeed, eleven o'clock before they said their last good-byes.

"I do not know when I have seen two finer fellows," said he, as with the ladies he turned back from the door, after the young men had driven away. "I always liked what little I saw of Will Gadsden, and mighty sorry I was for him when he broke down. But this friend of his, or of yours, Bertha, is a great acquisition to the town. Prescott told me he thought they had a treasure in him; but I do not think Prescott understood how much of a man he is, how accomplished a gentleman he is."

"I do not think Mr. Prescott could understand, papa."

"Oh, you must not be hard upon Prescott, puss. Wait till he has shared his last crust with you, as he has with me, and you will not grudge him the privilege of an occasional blunder in his grammar."

"As many as you like, papa, if he only talks to you, and not to me. Good-night, good-night. I really feel as if the evening had done something."

And the next day, and the next, showed that it

had done something. Mr. Oelrich had taken up the Deritend club with a will. He was well pleased with his own scheme of a capital large enough to buy all the furniture and fixtures, and to yield a little income against a rainy day. At the first meeting of the bank directors, he talked the scheme "into" them. Then he made it in his way to see the three or four magnates who owned the Deritend House, and he talked his schemes into them. He was one of the people who are used to having things succeed. He never permitted them to fail, indeed; and this the little world of Bromwich knew very well. And when he intimated his confidence in the success of his own plans by subscribing five hundred dollars to a capital stock of five thousand, it was clear enough to Japhet Newland, to Dr. Witherspoon, to Judge Ellery, and to my uncle Dr. Claridge, that he was fully in earnest, knew this thing could succeed, and meant that it should.

Ruther and one or two of his companions, to whom a hundred dollars was of more account than ten thousand were to these magnates, avouched their faith by taking each a share of the capital at a hundred dollars. Three or four widowed ladies one, alas! who had reason, in a desolate home, to wish there had never been any bar-room in Bromwich — took each a single share. The Baptist Sewing Society, the Methodist Charity Committee, and the Presbyterian Sewing Circle, all composed of women, made each their respective ministers

shareholders. And thus, in two or three weeks, the existence of the club was made sure by five subscriptions to its stock of five hundred dollars; one of three hundred, six of two hundred, and ten of one hundred each. There were fifty shares in all.

Judge Ellery, Mr. Oelrich, and George Ruther were trustees who held this money, and were to appoint their own successors.

Thus fortified, the trustees went boldly forward, and hired the whole of the ground floor of the north wing of the Deritend House for an annual rent of two thousand dollars, which carried with it the condition that while they occupied these premises no liquor should be sold at any bar in the house, nor should any liquor be sold to be carried from the house. It was admitted that a *bona fide* traveller might order liquor in his rooms or at his meals, and that while the house held a taverner's license it might fill this order. But this permission was not to cover the service of liquor for parties of guests, and the keepers of the house bound themselves to restrict this sale to persons who were really transient travellers, who bought for their own use.

The rent would have been enormous, had it not brought with it this condition. With the condition, all parties considered it fair.

The north wing was, on the whole, not badly arranged for the club's purposes. It contained the old bar-room, the billiard-room, the reading-

room, and two or three rather inconvenient private parlors. But, by knocking away one or two partitions, they would be able to have substantially Bertha Oelrich's *sine qua non;* namely, a sanctum for the women at one end, a sanctum for the men at the other, a coffee-room, a drawing-room, and a library beside the billiard-room.

Having gone thus far, and the gossip of the town being now at the very keenest on the matter, the shareholders drew up their constitution, and offered it for signature. I copy it from a musty old paper, which has not seen the light for years.

The Deritend Club

Is established to promote better society among the gentlemen and ladies of Bromwich. It will occupy for the present the rooms rented for the purpose in the Deritend House.

No person shall join the club till his or her name has been presented for at least one week by some member. If one-fourth of the members vote against the candidate in that time, the candidate is not elected, and cannot be named again for one year.

The officers, till otherwise ordered, are a president, treasurer, secretary, and three directors. The six constitute the board of management, and are chosen semi-annually.

Voting members of the club will pay an annual assessment of eight dollars.

Members who do not wish to vote will pay an annual assessment of two dollars, payable quarterly. Heads of

families may take family tickets to the club-rooms for twenty-five dollars, if elected members. But such membership carries but one vote.

Bromwich, Nov. 11, 1865.

With this programme, the twenty-two shareholders met and voted for members. They chose in eventually the greater part of the town. They chose all the college-boys, all the clerks in all the stores, and all their masters. Ruther brought up lists of the railroad men, and they chose all of them. They chose every girl in every paper-box factory and in every mantua-maker's shop. Unless, on a week's inquiry, something turned up to the disadvantage of a person named, they chose in him or her. They had a list of nearly a thousand people, who had wit enough to be on the voting list, or to subscribe for some newspaper, or to belong to some sewing circle. The shareholders had no desire to keep people out, but to bring them in.

At the first election they chose about three hundred people, trying to keep the numbers of men and women equal. They sent to each of them a circular explaining the plan of the club, which they all knew very well before, and asked them to meet, only two days after, in the club parlors. Well, a great many did meet. The college-boys came in great force. Enough voting members joined to choose a set of officers, and to ballot for more members. Once a week they met to vote for more. And then things went briskly on.

Dr. Claridge was chosen President.

Gustav Oelrich was Treasurer.

Bertha Oelrich was secretary.

George Ruther, William Gadsden, and Fanny Gregg were Directors.

Then these people appointed Committees on Membership, Committee on Library, Committee on Coffee-Room, Committee on Ladies' Room, Committee on Smoking-Room, with Committees on Furniture, on Newspapers, and, — oh I do not know what there were not committees on! And with such an Executive, and the thorough interest of the town, you may be sure that these committees were by no means slow in their duties.

Well, if you want to see what the club rooms proved to be, you had better come to Bromwich and see them; though, to be sure, they are twice as large now as they were then.

The billiard-room they left much as they found it, only they put a new paper on the walls and cocoa matting on the floor.

The women, under Mrs. Oelrich, did their best on the drawing-room; and the men, led by Will and by Bernard, did their best on the library. And, for Bromwich, very pretty rooms they were and are. No lack of coal in Bromwich, and cheerful fires blazed in those gigantic grates all winter long.

What mysteries were in the ladies' sanctum, nay, what comforts were in the men's smoking-room, it

is not for these pages to describe. Let Jenkins tell.

What I have to describe is

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION.

With every paperhanger who worked on parlor or library, with every bale of carpet which came from Cincinnati, when the grand piano arrived from Steinway, and when the boxes of books from Appleton's began to arrive, the public interest and excitement waxed keener and keener. When a tall cheval glass from Philadelphia was unpacked, — such as was not known in Bromwich before, — there was new amazement; and each of the novelties, whether great or small, was an advertisement of the club. At last the upholstering and furnishing were over, the newspapers and magazines directed to "The Deritend Club" began to arrive. The men who in America are called fresco-painters, because they do not paint in fresco, took down their tall frameworks, and showed the beautiful ceilings they had worked upon. With new brooms the tidy chambermaids of the Deritend swept the new carpets. Fresh flowers from the Oelrich conservatories, and from the Ellerys' and the Rittenhouses', and even from the far-away Watsons', blazed on the tables and mantels. The latest "London Spectator," "Punch," and "Saturday Review" were on the green tables, with a "Grenzboten" for Hans Otterbein, and a "Revue des Deux Mondes" for Dr. Witherspoon.

Long before this time the first hundred members had chosen many more hundred members from that catholic list I told you of. To each person chosen a printed invitation had been sent; and a great many of them had joined the club at once. Still, more than half of them had made no sign.

It was not therefore till this night, when, as I say, the pretty parlor and the cosy reading-room blazed with flowers and glowed with hospitable fires, that we knew whether the "Social Revolution" would go forward.

Mrs. Oelrich always hoped, but while she hoped she sometimes feared. But four persons never feared for an instant. They were Will Gadsden, pretty Fanny Gregg, and her two brothers. "Fanny," said Horace, "this house will be swamped with people. They have no idea how many of their invitations will be accepted. I know the pulse of this town better than they do." And Fanny and Clara bestirred themselves. While dear Mrs. Gregg presided over the forces in the club rooms, and dusted here and directed there, and consulted Bertha, and agreed with Bertha's mother, those nice girls and their brothers, with an attached throng of the servants, were privately decorating every room in each wing of the ground floor of the house, and were making all their part of it cheerful and glad. It would be hard to say where Clara got her flowers. Not from the grand conservatories, but from Miss Etter's frames and

Mary Freeland's windows and Aunt Rachel's parlors. And Bernard and half the Sophomores had privily collected prince's pine for her, and every press in Bromwich had given up its treasures of colored maple and sumac for her. Every room was festooned with wreaths and green pennons of her prince's pine, and the spaces within glowed with her crimson and gold. Over the carpet of the ladies' large drawing-room she had a faultless white linen dancing carpet. All these preparations Fanny and Clara had carried on without fuss, and, indeed, without the knowledge of the hard-working parties in the club room.

The Deritend Club Rooms were to be opened to the Club on Christmas eve. So read the cards. And as early as five Hans Otterbein and Mrs. Otterbein and all the little Otterbeins were unloaded from the great double sleigh in which they had been driven in. The tidy "page in waiting," as the black boy chose to call himself, from some novel he had picked up in a "New York Weekly," showed them to the cloak-rooms, and, to Hans Otterbein's amazement, gave him tickets for his coat and hat and fur gloves. The president and all the officers and the committee of reception were on duty to receive. Gustav Oelrich delighted Mrs. Otterbein by talking German to her, and, in the most matter-of-fact way, set to work to explain to her what comforts and conveniences she was to receive from the club rooms every time she came

to town to do her shopping. How she would not have to wait at that stupid Dietrich's shop till he had made up her parcel; how it would be quite enough if she just left her order at Walworth's; how she could run on, if she wanted, to the High School, and see if the children were going forward to her mind; and then she could come round to the club and warm her feet and heat her soapstone, and be all ready for the boys to join her when school was over, — and here would be the parcel from Walworth, and the parcel from Dietrich, and no danger that she would leave either of them anywhere.

Like most people in this world, Mrs. Otterbein understood the concrete instance much better than any abstract theory.

"Ah, you have heard my poor story?" said she.

No: Mr. Oelrich had not heard it at all. And then there followed a long story, how she had left a parcel at Tunstall the butcher's, but she supposed she had left it at Clark and Vanderwall's, and so on and so on. And she began to see, what she had never seen before, that the Deritend Club was to come into her staid and matronly life, and was not a mere device for boys and girls who wanted dancing, or people, like her husband, who wanted to read the newspapers.

Meanwhile, the "page in waiting," and many other pages in waiting, all wearing the pretty button-hole bouquets which Bertha had provided,

were at their wits' end to hurry people up fast enough, and to dismiss in order the sleighs which followed fast upon each other at the doors. Whatever the village people meant to do about the Deritend Club, it was clear enough that the people at Faff's and at the Gap and on the Lower Level, nay, that even all the Watsonville people, meant to patronize it. They had found out the use of a place to warm their fingers in on a cold day. Frank Gregg, as I have said, was not caught surprised nor unprepared. He had a full force in his own stables, and he was ready with the stalls at Urquhart's livery, and at Brown's also. And, though Frank would ask no favors of Readhead at the Northern, his stable-boys were on perfectly good terms with their stable-boys, and that lazy Readhead never knew how many horses came through his stable-yard that night and were sheltered in his great empty barn. But so many of the country people came, and they came so early, and they seemed so well pleased, — they sat down so resolutely to look at the plates in the Cyclopædias and the prints in "Punch" and "Harper's Weekly" and the "Illustrated News," taking in very completely that these things were theirs, and were what they had paid their money for, — so many of them were there, I say, and so comfortable were they, that Bertha at seven o'clock came to George Ruther in utter despair.

"Dear Mr. Ruther, what shall we do? These rooms are as full as they will hold; and there is

not one person from the village here yet. I have told everybody I saw not to come a minute before seven; and now all our accommodations are taken up, and, when they come, they will not see one of their pretty things."

"The more, the merrier," said he; but he looked puzzled and rueful as she did, and they both laughed.

"Better too many than too few, mamma says," said Bertha, more pensively. "And it is not three hours since she was sure that there would not be fifty people here. Don't you think it would do to tell some of these good folks that they must give room to others? That woman has sat in that easy-chair an hour, if she has sat a minute there."

"But she may sit there a month, under the by-laws of the club," said Ruther, as ruefully as before.

"And yet they keep pouring in!" said poor Bertha. "I threw open the coffee-room before they were ready there, but that was only a moment's respite. As for the billiard-room, I believe they will have to stand on the tables, or sit under them. Really, Mr. Ruther, we should have fitted the rooms with galleries," and she wrung her hands in mock agony.

"Gadsden," said Ruther, beckoning to Will to come nearer, "what is to happen to us? We shall be trampled under the feet of enraged clubbists. We shall be fighting for the right to approach the window, as they did at the Black

Hole of Calcutta. They come, and come, and come! Don't you wish you had blackballed all the last nomination?"

"Not I," said Will, triumphantly. "Let them come as the leaves of Vallombrosa come! But, if this is club-life, they must be queer people, if they like it. And do you know, George, this is hardly the beginning? There are not ten college-boys here!"

"It is all that we are so hopelessly agreeable," said Bertha. "'This fatal gift of beauty,' as Mrs. Radcliffe says. Can't you disguise your charms a little, Mr. Gadsden? Can't you look fierce for once, and drive them away?"

"There!" cried Ruther: "somebody has made a diversion." And the crowd swayed into the drawing-room at the sound of some bold loud chords on the great piano.

It was Susie Claridge who had undertaken this entertainment of the guests, and who had chosen the Grand March in Faust to dedicate the new piano by. Close to the instrument the throng in that room pressed to listen; and Bertha and George Ruther both — so soon as they knew who was playing, as they did, of course, in a moment — looked stealthily on Will Gadsden's face, and then caught each other's eyes as they looked away from it. Poor fellow! he had not heard Susie play, now, for so long! It was not strange that his eyes flashed so!

The library or reading-room was a little cleared

for a moment by the throng which thus pressed into the drawing-room. But neither Bertha nor Will had exaggerated. The cry was still "They come," and no one went away. Not one Watsonville visitor dreamed of going. "If there were anything more to eat," said Bertha. "I could understand their staying for it. But surely they have had all the tea they wanted; and poor Miss Ellery must be dead at her tea-table before this. I have not dared go in there for an hour."

Susie tried one and another bright, hearty march or waltz; and then Frank Brannan took her place at the piano, and he and Hooper began to sing. They have rich voices, and they sung a little ballad of Hooper's, —

> "Let me tell you, boys, the story
> Of the dark and bloody land," —

and they sang it well. The room was fairly hushed to listen; and, when they came to the end, more than one of the old farmers was crying.

In the library there was more breathing room. Horace Gregg found Ruther and Gadsden and Bertha, and said: "I don't want to interrupt; but I am so glad to find any one in authority. You will be crowded to death here: you have not half your people yet. I foresaw all this; and have some music in the great ladies' parlor. Shall I tell them to play?"

"Horace Gregg, you are a trump," said Ruther, in admiration.

"Mr. Gregg," said Bertha, "you shall be crowned by every girl on the committee. You have saved the life of I don't know how many citizens. I was dying of mortification at our miscalculations."

"Ah, Miss Oelrich, there are never too many guests, when they are only friends." And he held up his hand, stood on tiptoe so as to catch the eye of Sam, his faithful squire, — who waited on the stairway, watching him, — and he, the moment he saw the signal, flung open the doors of the great ladies' drawing-room of the hotel, — not one of the club rooms, — and at the instant the band which Frank Gregg had secreted there began to play.

No! they did not play the overture to Fidelio. They played "Hail Columbia," and they played it very well. It was the Shelbyville band, who had been smuggled into town by Frank and Horace Gregg, resolved to have their part in the entertainment. And so busy were we club managers in our arrangements that we had not seen nor guessed that the House was making its arrangements on a much broader and more business-like scale than we.

Bertha clapped her hands with delight. "And yet I don't know why I am surprised, Mr. Gregg: for this is just like you, if half what your friends say is true of you." And she held out her hand to him. This was their introduction to each other. Then she blushed, and he blushed. But he rallied, and offered her his arm, and walked with her into

the great ladies' parlor, — as I must call it, to distinguish it from the club parlor, — and there presented her to his mother and father; and there she found Fanny and Clara, his sisters, and praised them with all her heart, as women can, when they will, for the beauty and the surprise of their decorations.

"To think, you witches, that, while your mother was slaving herself to death with us, you were so quietly making a garden out of these rooms, and keeping your work secret to the last. Yet you appeared, Fanny, from time to time, as a manager should; and I had no thought that any such marvels were going on."

Fanny confessed that they had many hands to help them, and that she did not know where they should have been but for the Sophomores.

The crash of music from the band soon drew the crowd out into the spacious halls, and into the great hotel drawing-rooms. Dr. Claridge himself came up with a pretty Mrs. Templeman from Washington, the wife of the Senator, to whom he was making the agreeable, and showing the lions as to the most distinguished stranger in town. The Doctor had not had much to do with our upholstering and furnishing, but he knew enough of it to know what he was to call attention to. The diversion into the larger rooms brought as much satisfaction to him as to the rest of the managers. And to lead that diversion, so far as he might, he led the way with his guest.

So they entered among the first from their side, and came full upon pretty Fanny Gregg with her attendants. She was looking prettier than ever, as her face flushed a little with the success of her surprise, and their eager thanks for the relief; and she looked her very best, as the president of the club made his acknowledgments to her.

"Dear Dr. Claridge," said she, very prettily, "you forget that I am a director in the Deritend Club also, though one of the humblest of directors. What duty have I to-night but to help forward the inauguration?"

"I must certainly compliment you, my dear Doctor, on your choice of directors," said Mrs. Templeman. "We shall all be converted to Women's Rights, if you always give us such nice public servants as Miss Gregg and Mrs. Oelrich."

The Doctor told her that he quite agreed with her in her estimate of his subordinates, and said that for a very little club, say to take a sleigh-ride together, or eat a leg of mutton together, he would not ask for a better selection than his five officers and directors. This gave him an opportunity to present George Ruther to Mrs. Templeman, and Ruther then took her off to show her some of Miss Gregg's remarkable tupelos, hackmatacks, and hornbeams. So Dr. Claridge, on his part, had a chance to offer Fanny Gregg his arm, and to walk round her rooms with her, talking to her first about what the Sophomores had

done, and then, as I guessed, on matters much more central and vital. To the immense interest of half Bromwich, the president of the club was before long seated on a sofa in the corner of the room, talking to the daughter of the hotel-keeper as eagerly as ever he talked to a student who had come up for advice to his sanctum, and talking at the same time in tones so low that, even had any one been rude in that assembly, no one could have guessed what the subject was. And Fanny Gregg was evidently as eager, and after a minute as unconscious, as was he.

Meanwhile to George Ruther, as they walked, Mrs. Templeman said: "It 's all nonsense, Mr. Ruther. I spent five years in Europe. I have lived in Paris, I have lived in Vienna. I was three months in Edinboro'. I was six months in Berlin. I have spent the season in London. I have spent a season in Geneva, and I was a winter in Rome. Well, you will know what I mean, so I am not afraid to say that I had great advantages there. My father was a minister of our government, and we had all the advantages the diplomatic service gives. I had young friends enough, friends of very early days, to be well received everywhere. And I was well received. I know I was. I have enjoyed life very much wherever I have been, never more than I enjoy it now at Washington.

"Still, Mr. Ruther, if you talk of Society, and mean 'Society,' the best society I have ever seen

was in a manufacturing town of ten thousand people."

"Where? in England or Scotland?"

"Oh, dear, no!" said she: "I do not know what they have there. This was in America, not a thousand miles from where we are to-day."

"I think I know what you mean."

"I mean this: that if there were a bright young lawyer, we all knew him; if there were a Norwegian in a wire-mill who could read Bishop Tegner, we knew that; if there were a clever girl in a public school who drew well or sang well, we knew her; if there were a nice Quaker girl who had that divine gift for acting that some Quaker girls have, we knew her; if there were a young Baptist minister who was in correspondence with the patriarch of Russia, we knew him; and if there were a young doctor who knew where to find Mayflowers half an hour before the rest of us, we knew him. Don't you see, when a place is as small as that place was, there is some chance for society? But society is impossible in London or Vienna, unless you take it in coteries, and coteries cannot be many-sided."

"The town must be small; but it must be bright, Mrs. Templeman."

"I have found no Americans who were not bright enough," said she. "The trouble with us is, that having no native gift for society, and having great gifts for other things, say for subduing the world, we get so tired with them that

we let the society go. There is my husband. Tired to death with acting as the petty attorney for all his constituents, he tells me to take the carriage and to leave his cards for him, and then he says that the society of Washington is dull. The truth is that the real society of Washington is almost incomparably good, for reasons you understand. But he knows no more about it, after seven years, than I know of the society of Pekin."

"Yet Washington is better than any other large American city," said Ruther.

"Was before the war, may be again," said she. "For there is no other place known to me where the men do not want to work after four o'clock in the afternoon. Therein Washington has one great advantage. Have you put on an eight-hour law in Bromwich?"

"No," said he, laughing; "but, if you will not publish it in the newspaper, I have great hopes that this club may do so. If Mr. Oelrich there, or Professor Webber there, or Judge Ellery there, or much more Converse and Wayland, and those ambitious young lawyers, can spend an hour a day here and not lose reputation, there is an hour a day saved for each of them, and three or four years added to each of their lives. And if, as time passes, women as mature and agreeable as Mrs. Claridge, and Mrs. Ellery, and Mrs. Halliday, and Mrs. Templeman, will think it is not beneath them to spend an hour here occasionally,

why such men as these will give the hour to the club. Its real success depends, as the success of everything else depends, on the women, and on the best women of the town."

"I am sure the women are much obliged to you in general," said she, "and Mrs. Templeman in particular. But we will not stop to compliment. Do you know that Mr. Sarmiento said to me—"

And they swept on.

Meanwhile Mr. Oelrich and Bertha and Frank Gregg had organized a dozen or more quadrilles in the great ladies' drawing-room; the dancing enthusiasm had spread to the adjacent public drawing-room; the band had sent its fiddlers to the front, and spirited dancing-music was beginning. All this drew even a larger number of the young people away from the club rooms proper, and the company left in them was just large enough to make them cheerful and sociable, and to show just what they were and what they were meant for. In the great ladies' drawing-room, Dr. Claridge was still in his everlasting and unconscious *tête-à-tête* with Fanny Gregg on the sofa in the corner. On the other sofas were a few matrons sitting well pleased; but, excepting the dancers, hardly another person in the room. Bernard was here and there and everywhere, taking directions from the leader of the band, pushing head couples here and foot couples there, when a shy Sophomore, with a shyer little country

girl for a partner, beckoned him and said that they had no *vis-à-vis*, and asked him to find one.

"Surely," said Bernard; and he rushed on to the hall to pounce on the first man he might, before he waved his hand to the band.

The first man of course was Will Gadsden. "Will, Will! find some girl and come and dance here, just to start them."

"Oh, anything but that, Bern!" said poor Will, and his face fell for the first time that evening.

Bernard cursed himself for saying just the wrong thing, as usual. But he did not forget what he was after. Still it seemed as if there were nobody in the hall but German stock-raisers and veterans of the Thirty Years' War, certainly nobody whom Bernard dared ask to dance. He plunged back into the drawing-room, and found his sister Susie listening to Mrs. Otterbein's account of the epidemic among her chickens.

"Susie," said Bernard, "do let me bring you somebody to dance with, so as to make up this set."

"Oh, anything but that, Bern!" said poor Susie, and her face fell for the first time that evening. And again Bernard cursed himself for a fool.

He told the Sophomore he must take the side of the quadrille, and must find his own *vis-à-vis*, while the head and foot went through the figure. Then he waved his hand to his leader of the

music, whatever son of Korah that might be, ran to Clara Gregg, who was his own partner, looked round once more, half-puzzled, as he wondered what his father and Fanny could be talking about and crying about, and so the dancing began.

And now the first germs of club life showed themselves, — oh, how timidly! But then and there "Society" was born in Bromwich, and the "Social Revolution" began. The billiard-room was then much too large for the four tables in it; and the committee had put at the two ends eight inlaid chess-tables, and furnished them with regulation chess-men, ordered by Will from the Place Palais Royal. Here was a nice nut-brown girl, who had bravely brought an "Illustrated News" in her hand, and had set out a problem for herself, to try to solve it. She had, of her own free spirit, achieved that greatest of discoveries, that nobody was looking at her, thinking of her, or caring one penny whether she lived or died. To the next table came a frightened Senior, who had joined the club that he might read French newspapers, and now was so terrified in the reading-room, lest any one should see him reading a French newspaper, and might think he was "squirting," that he had retired into the furthest corner of the billiard-room, and was inventing a problem for himself there. As he went on with his problem, he saw the nut-brown girl bring in hers. He turned his back to her, and went on. When, of a sudden, scales fell from his eyes also!

Was it some burst of laughter from the coffee-room? Was it some memory of something he had read in the Greek Reader, that the bashful man is a proud fool? Was it "gospel light in Bullen's eyes"? Do not ask me. I do not know. But he also was converted to the great law of the universe. With courage surpassing that which crossed the bridge of Lodi, he turned and walked to the other table, and said, "When you have finished your problem, will you play with me, Miss Marston, though I play very badly?" The last word choked in his throat, like the last death-gasp of an athlete in the arena. Still Mary Marston understood, swept her problem off the board, and for two hours they two did the thing they liked best in the whole world.

In the coffee-room Miss Ellery was in her element. She was joking, laughing, scolding, ordering, sympathizing, snubbing, repenting, and apologizing. Dry old gentlemen, like Japhet Newland, and even Aaron Roscommon himself, who had not been to a party for years, sat around her with dry old ladies, the partners of their youth when men danced "Hull's Victory" and the "Lancashire Lass." And though the caps of these ladies were stiff, and though it was difficult to account whether for the contrasts or the harmonies in their ribbons, every one of them felt as young, my dear Lily, and my dear Ben, and my dear Helen, as you do on this living Christmas morning when you read of them. And so did the

Judge and Japhet Newland and the other old-time admirers.

At the piano, in the ladies' room, there sat Hannah Guilders, a bright girl from the cloak-room at Clark and Vanderwall's, delighted to play on an instrument which was really finer than any other in town. And around her were a group of young people, with "Do try this," and "Do try that, Hannah," turning over one and another book of glees or of hymn-tunes, or one and another sheet of music, which had been provided as the beginning of the club's musical library. Here was old Judge Ellery himself, beaming as he listened.

"How little it takes to make young folks happy, Mr. Newland."

And in one corner were two or three girls puzzling over a "Bazar." This was before the days of "Harper's Bazar," I think. I am sure, at least, that this was a German copy. Here were the mysterious dots, and the manifold secrets, all imprinted on the same page; here were the puzzles, the problems, and all the rest, but all the text was German; and these girls, who could not read a word of German, were trying to make out how this and that could be, from mere force of will and ingenuity. When, as I live, there is Hosea Withers, the most solemn of Divinity students, who spent all last year in Halle, deep in Dogmatik, not quite telling them what is the German for "girl" and what is the German for

"pretty," but still actually explaining how it must be meant that this gore shall fit into that angle, and translating for them all the intricate instructions about three needles and four loops, casting off two stitches and knitting three!

If Hosea Withers can do that, we need not despair for the reconstruction of society! We shall see Professor Middleage himself teaching Miss Julia Clark how to frost her hearts and how to "dorer" her rounds!

So for eager, cheerful, surprising hours upon hours, the evening of the dedication of the rooms sped by.

At nine o'clock there came a second surprise. All through the evening the coffee-room had been in full blast, with such refreshments as the club expected to be prepared to furnish from hour to hour of its working life, as was fully explained in programme B, which had been distributed among the members. "Neither more nor less than every-day work," — Mr. Oelrich said, — "we put our best foot foremost, but our worst foot is as good as our best." And people had paid for what they ate and drank, or had opened their account on the club books, all according to the ordinances for such cases made and provided. This was all the "entertainment," as a carnal world calls "victuals and drink," which the managers had planned. But at nine o'clock Mr. Charles Gregg, with all his own suavity of deportment, had come to Dr. Claridge, and had

asked him if he would be so good as to lead Mrs. Oelrich out to supper; had intimated that if the Doctor would leave Fanny, to whom he had again frozen, somebody else would take care of her. At the same moment the band struck up a march, the great doors of the great hotel dining-room were thrown open, and there, to be sure, was supper served for the whole company; and, in procession, the whole company followed the president and the vice-president to the feast. This was the second surprise achieved by the hosts of the house, in their care for the guests of the club and the club itself. The secret had been well kept, and the surprise was complete and brilliant.

The fame of it cleared the club library and the drawing-room. And when Will Gadsden, only afraid that some timid dressmaker or more timid academy boy might have lingered in the one room or the other, passed rapidly through the billiard-room, library, and drawing-room, he saw only Bertha, as she entered the last of these rooms on the same errand with himself.

He gave her both hands; and they stood and looked each other in the face, laughing.

"You came to hunt for stragglers," said he; "but there are no stragglers here. I have hunted both those rooms through, and looked into the coffee-room."

"The crash of the march called them all," said she: "was it not good in Horace Gregg?

And how they must have worked, all of them, really with their own hands, all day!"

"I saw Horace, just now, at the office. And I think he is the handsomest, happiest fellow I ever saw. Oh, dear! I could not but go back to that wretched morning, which — which I could not speak of but that you know it all." And he led her across the room to the fire; and she sat, not unwilling, in one of the deep lolling-chairs, and let him move a smaller chair for himself to her side.

"Is it not good to sit down for just a minute, and to be sure they are all taken care of?" cried she. "Mr. Gadsden, was there ever anything so successful?"

"It could not be better," said he. "I suppose you imagined it, but I did not. The half was not told me, nor the quarter of a half. What I did not expect was that everybody would fit in so exactly. You see — well, all is that I was a fool. Somehow, I supposed that, because I had been in England, and had dined at the Union League in New York, I knew how to act at our little club, and that I could teach them. And just so, — of course, I was a fool: they knew what they were about a hundred times better than I did."

"That 's it precisely," said Bertha. "When I saw one of those Divinity students explaining to Jane Furness how she was to knit a chair-tidy, then I said, 'Nunc dimittis.' I then and there resolved that I would never think the work of the

world rested on me again. Oh, dear me! Will, do you remember that day when I took you into the carriage? How little while it was ago!"

And by this time Miss Bertha Oelrich's face was fire. For although all these girls used to call him "Will," when he entered college with Bernard Claridge, and they were themselves in the academy, and although "Bertha" and "Will" had lasted till his disgrace, she had not, of course, broken any barrier in this fashion, not in all the conferences and intimacies of the Directorate, of the room-furnishing, and of endless walks, rides, and committee-meetings.

Will did his best, and with a certain success, not to seem to notice the slip, and to go on as if nothing had happened. But he did notice it, and he "worked on nerve" for a good many words, before he spoke easily again.

"How little while to be sure!" said he; "and yet it seems, in some things it seems, as if we were in another world! Poor Mrs. Meiers, — think of the change there! John Corkery, — think of all that! Ruther, too," — and his face beamed with the Uriel rapture, — "to think that I scarcely knew that man that day! How did I ever live without the — well, I can't talk about Ruther, Miss Bertha. But, when I come home to work after a walk with him, everything seems so clear, and I am another man."

It was Will Gadsden who had forgotten himself now, and it was Miss Bertha who was trying

to look properly indifferent, as she listened to praises of Mr. George Ruther, which she would not have trusted herself to utter, nor even own to herself that she took pleasure in. But she had to say something too. How steadfastly our good breeding holds us to our work! and she succeeded in saying, —

"Come home to work, Mr. Gadsden! You do not pretend that you have done any work in the last two months, excepting direct those paper-hangers and scold the carpet-men?"

"Why, of course, it does not amount to much; but, then, what am I here for, Miss Oelrich? I must go to my lectures, you know; and Judge Ellery and Professor Howland and Mr. Carleton do expect something."

"And you have really been studying since this club was formed?"

"Not as hard as I wish I had, but I have not been behindhand."

"Studying!" cried the impetuous girl. "Studying law, in that den of yours upstairs, just as if there were no club, no application for license, no Phi Nu, no notes going to protest, no Horace Gregg!" She longed to say, "No Susie Claridge." But this time she held herself in check.

"No! not that," said he: "I won't brag, Miss Bertha; but I will say that I have studied twenty times harder and to more purpose than I could have done, or should have done, but for these

things, — the terrible things or the good things. Here you know," now he spoke more confidentially, and he had indeed forgotten himself in her sympathy, — "here, you know, everything is real, and close at hand. Now, at Heidelberg, the whole motive of my life was three thousand miles away. Here it is my own language and my own home."

His eyes were filling with tears, and, for that matter, hers were too.

"Oh, Miss Bertha, there is not a step that I take in this house but reminds me of what I threw away here. I cannot do the least kindness to one of those shy students, but the boy is I myself; and it is Dr. Claridge or Mrs. Claridge, or she herself, who is saying some kind, encouraging word to me. And then, you see of course, it is madness to think how I threw all such kindness away; and it would be death itself, but that God makes us hope and tells us to forget. And, of course, I swear a hundred times a day that, if I can make a career, or can redeem a character, I will; that I will do it here, and that one day she shall not be ashamed that I loved her, and love her, as no man ever loved woman before!

"But, Miss Oelrich, I never ought to have said this to you. Only it is a blessing to say it to somebody."

Bertha was pale with excitement, and her eyes overflowing with tears. But she held her hand out and gave it to him, and said: "Will, I thank

you with all my heart for saying it, and I thank God for teaching you to say it. Only I wish it had been said to one other person before you said it to me. But, Will," she said again, "you are sure of one friend, who will pray for you every night, and hope for you every day; and that is I. I call you 'Will' on purpose now," she added proudly.

"And you will promise me —"

"I will promise you anything, everything. I have implicit confidence in you, Will."

"Thank you," said he, and he bent over and kissed her hand, as if this were a covenant. "Then promise me that you will never by word or token let her know, or any one know, that I have said to you what I have said."

"Oh, Will, that is hard."

"Hard, but it must be, you see! If ever that saint comes to know that I am new-born and another man, she must find it for herself, and not because I have said so. Talk is so easy!" He said this with all Abdiel's scorn.

"I have promised," said Bertha, "and what I promise I perform. But I am sure you are all wrong. You ought to let me, at least, tell her mother."

"Tell nobody that I have lisped a syllable to you. Why, I do not even speak to George about this. An hour ago, it was a secret between me and God, — that I live and move with the one determination that she shall know me one day as

I am. Now, Bertha, it is a secret between us three. And you will keep it."

"Indeed I will!" said she; and on the instant, as some stranger came into the room, he bade her good-bye, and hurried away.

"Bertha!" said Susie Claridge, pushing back the deep arm-chair in which she had been lying, with its back turned to them, just on the other side of the tall fire-screen. "Bertha!" and she tottered across to her friend, and then sank on the footstool, with her head in Bertha's lap. "Bertha, I heard every word you said, and he —"

"My poor, dear child!" said Bertha, and she bent over her and kissed the sobbing girl.

"Why, how? — I don't know how. Yes, I was here. I think I was asleep, Bertha, and then I heard you laugh, and he laughed; and then I did not know where I was, and then you said something, or he did, I don't know. And it was so pleasant just to hear his voice that I waited one minute before I turned round. Of course it was very weak and very wicked; but I did, Bertha, and then you know — why, then you know — why, what could I do, Bertha, but just lie there and hear the whole?"

"You are a darling child," said Bertha, kissing her, "and he is a hero, if there ever was one. You may forget the whole, my dearie, and I will keep your secret for you. I am good at secrets. Yours is not the first I have had to-night."

And upon that a regiment of people swept in,

and at last some of the most distant Watsonville people began to say that it was time to go!

And that was the end of the inauguration meeting of the Deritend Club, so far as the Claridge family was concerned. I remember that we all walked home, and that everybody was very silent; only, as we plodded on in Indian file through the newly fallen snow, I heard Aunt Lois say to her husband, "My dear Amos, what were you talking about so long with Fanny Gregg?"

And the Doctor, craftiest of men, replied, "Yes, she 's a very nice girl indeed. I saw you talking to Clara: is she like her sister?" To which Mrs. Claridge made some unintelligible answer.

And when we came to the stoop of the house, as the Doctor was fumbling for his pass-key, we heard the clock of the college strike twelve. "Christmas morning!" cried Bernard. "Dear Susie, I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year," and with both his hands he took hers, and kissed her. Did their hands hold together a little longer than is usual with the hands of brothers and sisters? I dinna ken. Just then the Doctor found the key, we all tramped into the house and shook the snow from our feet, and Bernard, seizing his candle, rushed directly upstairs, singing, "Adeste fideles, læti triumphantes."

CHAPTER XIV

CHRISTMAS DAY

I CALLED that last chapter the Social Revolution, because that phrase came to be a by-word and joke in Bromwich. It had slipped out from some of Mrs. Oelrich's merry talk; and afterwards, for years, when anything nice happened which could be traced directly or indirectly to the Deritend Club, we young folks said it belonged to the "Social Revolution:" a horseback ride to Paradise, or a hop on the college lawn at the end of a term, were referred to the "Social Revolution." At last the joke went so far that any girl who meant to have a party that was to be particularly informal and particularly jolly asked you in her notes to a "Social Revolution."

This was all a joke; but the truth is, that though of course there was no revolution wrought at one particular moment, still from that Christmas eve to this hour, when I write, Bromwich has been a much nicer place to live in than it ever was before. For the sensible and intelligent women of the town, having for once taken direction of its social arrangements in that business of the club, have never let go of them; and so the regulation of the society of the place has never again dropped into the hands of fools or of boys and girls. Of course, in such a place, such women can do just

what they choose, if they only set out to in the right way. And the Deritend ladies, finding themselves together from time to time in knots of two or three, engaged in one or another plan which we should hardly have heard of, had they only met under the restricted circumstances of afternoon calls, of neighborhood tea-fights, of parish sociables, or of great evening parties. It might be that two or three of them met by accident at the club rooms, when they had done their shopping; or it might be that when the spring court met here, and the flower of the bar of the State was here, they met from day to day some of the best men we have in public life. The fact that they met each other, and met on common ground, was enough to make them feel at ease in arranging with their husbands and sons what I suppose ought to be called the larger economies of the village, — if economy means the law of living, and not a miserable parsimony.

This is my theory of the thing, and may be all wrong. But I am nine years older than I was that day when Aunt Lois and her committee called on Mr. Gregg and his sons; and I can tell what has happened here since that day. There is a society for planting trees in the streets, and they plant five hundred every year. Last year with their extra money they set up a pretty fountain in the middle of the Common, and a smaller one on that queer triangle in front of the old Elephant tavern. This tree society was formed at the Deritend Club.

We have three or four nice companies of amateur actors, each of them under the direction and training of some of the best people of the town and college; and as often as twice a week, every winter, we have an English, French, or German play from them, — plays so well got up and so well patronized that no strolling company of irresponsible blackguards ever seeks foothold in Bromwich. I heard the German company sing Fidelio last week, with Mr. Herman, the minister of the Methodist Church, sitting one side of me, and Professor Baxter, the preacher to the college, on the other, while Jane Edgar, the daughter of the Episcopal minister, was on the stage. None of these clubs would have existed but for the Deritend Club. In the first years of their success, they rented the great ball-room of the "Northern" hotel, and fitted it up with the scenery they wanted for a lecture-room or theatre. Afterwards they did n't know what to do with their money, till somebody suggested a public library, and since that has been in operation the trustees look to the dramatic club to supply it with the periodicals and the literature "of the year."

But I am getting far ahead of my story. Our business is with the Christmas Day which followed the inauguration of the Deritend. Not that I am to tell the fate of every turkey that was roasted that day, or every Marlborough pie that was eaten; but that more than one thing happened on that Christmas of all Christmases which concerned the

young people whose fortunes the reader has been following.

Poor Bertha Oelrich had but a hard-working Christmas of it. What with their hospitality at her father's, and their amiability, such days were apt to be hard on her mother and herself. For all the servants wanted to make holiday; and, if Mrs. Oelrich could have had her own way, she would gladly have sent them all to such devices and desires as they wanted to follow, — would have gone into her own kitchen, and sent Gustav Oelrich as good a dinner as he ever saw. But this was a thing he would not permit. So they always entertained a large company at dinner, with such a jury arrangement in the kitchen as breaks the heart of a good housekeeper, and as keeps her daughter in terror all the day long.

On this particular Christmas, Bertha Oelrich had cares and worries of her own. When she came home at midnight from the great party, delighted with its success, but tired — oh, how tired! — to the very corner of the nail on the end of her little finger, — as she stepped into the hall first, of all the party from the carriage, there were sitting four strange women, who rose and curtseyed with savage quaintness — as Bertha said afterwards — first to her and then to her mother. Who in the world were they?

They were John Corkery's wife and his three daughters from Ireland, who had come out to surprise him! They had hoped to arrive on Christ-

mas Day, so as to make the surprise perfect; and they had so far succeeded!

Now Bertha knew that these excellent women existed *in posse*. She knew that by all the received statutes, from the time of Ruth downward, it was, *prima facie*, the business of one of the four, at least, to go where John Corkery went and to stay where he stayed. But she knew also that, in his utter inability to take care of himself for the last fifteen years, this same helpmeet of his had found out long since that he could not take care of her, far less could she take care of him. Bertha had therefore encouraged John to send home from quarter to quarter a large lump of his wages; had read countless letters from "the parties" abroad, acknowledging these lumps; and had satisfied herself that, until John's force of will was decidedly increased, both parties to this contract, the American and the Irish, would be much the happier with the Atlantic between them, —

"Between let ocean roll."

She had gone so far as to read all John's letters "home," with his ready permission. Indeed, he was none too willing to write, unless Miss Bertha put him up to it; and very sure was Miss Bertha that no word nor hint on his part had suggested that these four people should quit service in Armagh for the sake of crossing to Bromwich. Arriving just as they did, when poor John had all a new life before him, Bertha's heart sank, as with the fore-

look, both of genius and experience, she saw at one flash what the winter was to bring on him and on them. She tried to shut her eyes on what it would bring on her; but she knew in her heart, of course, that the emigration was going to make more trouble to her than to any one of the five. At the moment it seemed as if it were going to work no weal to anybody.

So Bertha's heart sank to the soles of her feet; and, I doubt not, Mrs. Oelrich's to the soles of hers. The Corkery mother and daughters had arrived in the evening train, had come out to the only address they knew of as the abiding place of him to whom they had made this costly and unexpected present, had been received from the coach by one of the jury servants in waiting, — who knew as much of John Corkery as of Zoroaster, and as little, — and now were waiting for advices, for the return from the new-born Deritend Club of the heads of the family.

Poor Bertha! poor Mrs. Oelrich!

It was easy to put them all to bed, but it was quite clear that this Christmas Day would have duties and entertainments all its own.

And so indeed it did. Bertha sent down to John early in the morning explicit and absolute orders that he should come out to the house at once. And he came, — his first visit since his disgrace. Let it be confessed that never was volunteer forced more unwillingly to his duty!

Bertha was determined to be at church with her

Sunday-school class. It was the first time our church had ever been opened or decorated for Christmas; and Bertha had spent no end of time and of work in preparing for the carols and the decoration. She was determined to be on hand at home for any contingency in the kitchen, or in the stables even: her poor mother should have all the help she could give her. And now on a day so pre-engaged, — a day, too, which one would have been glad to have for one's self, if one might, for a little of its own blessing to heart and life, — on such a day were these four quaint savages precipitated upon her. She was to persuade John Corkery that he wanted them to come, to persuade them that they were cordially received, and, in the midst of festival and praise, she was to occupy herself in seeing where they were to live, — how they were to live, indeed; and, in a word, to lay the corner-stone of a home.

And Bertha remembered the monk by Geneva who had a vision of the Saviour. "Ah, well!" she said, "if I flinch, where will He go?"

It would have been better, perhaps, for Bertha to have made the emigrants as comfortable as she could till Christmas and New Year's were over, and trusted to the chapter of accidents for their establishment in a home. She could not trust to John Corkery for any such establishment. But it was not Mr. Oelrich's way, nor his wife's, nor his daughter's, to wait much for things to happen, which they could compel. This was a chronic

mistake of theirs, "as it seems to me." And also, at this moment, the house, never half large enough for Mr. Oelrich's hospitality, was crowded to the last attic and trunk-room, — double-bedded wherever it could be, Mrs. Oelrich said, — in the preparations that had been made for Christmas. John Corkery, also, was determined that his people should not "squat," as he called it, at Mr. Oelrich's. Whether it were wise or not, therefore, Bertha Oelrich took upon her over-burdened holiday the finding proper lodgings for John Corkery's wife and daughters, and the fit establishment of them in their Western home.

Yes; and I will not say that the details of the enterprise did not add something, at some times, to the zest of her Christmas rejoicing. Mrs. Oelrich did not go to church, — she did not dare to. Gustav Oelrich would not go: no, if he had said what he thought, it would have been that he praised the Lord much more effectively in the one day when the works at the tannery were closed, and he could take the comfort of his home, than he could serve Him in any other ritual. What he did say was, "Go yourself, my darling, and take the boys, if they choose. But nobody in my house shall go to church on Christmas, unless he wants to. I went enough when I was a boy to answer for you all."

And the children did sing the carols nicely, and the festoons and cross over the pulpit did look beautifully, and the choir sang "Adeste fideles"

a great deal better than could have been expected; and Bertha sat in her mother's place in the pew, and listened to dear Dr. Prentiss's congratulations happily, without running off more than four times to ask whether, after all, she had not better ask Miss Ellery to lend the Corkerys the cooking-stove that old Mrs. Brant used to have; and whether it would do to have them keep their wood in the backyard at Floyd Street, with that horrid Grattan Court so near them. On the whole, so far as the church went, Bertha enjoyed her service more than if she had read George Herbert all the morning.

But then came dinner; and it was hard work. The cousins were cousins she did not know at all, and they did not know each other. They were cousins of the most silent kind also. Some were cousins of her mother's mother, and some were cousins of her mother's father; and one or two were cousins of Bertha's father, who spoke but little English; and one or two were not cousins at all. Then, it must be confessed, there were hitches in the dinner, into which this chronicle shall not go. And although her father kept up talk and spirits admirably, still Bertha was depressed with the feeling that he was tired and dissatisfied. Poor child! as if it were any affair of hers, whether he were or were not. Everything seemed to Bertha to drag.

But, after dinner, Mr. Oelrich took off some of the cousins to try the ice on the lake, and Mrs.

Oelrich suggested "naps" to the other cousins by way of preparing for a few guests who were expected in the evening. And Bertha, to her joy, found she was alone; and that, after all, she could go down to Floyd Street again, and make sure that the stove had come; and tell the people at Faunce's, at the same time, that these strangers were persons her father was interested in, and that they must have credit, and must not be imposed upon. She knew perfectly well that, if she told her father or mother she was going, she should be prohibited; so she slipped out by the back door to the stable, which she found, as she had hoped, without biped occupants. She harnessed Puss herself, as she had done a hundred times before; she went out by the west avenue, so as not to pass the house, and had all the joy of loneliness and of an escapade, as in the short twilight and early evening she drove rapidly into the village.

But then and there her luck changed. The stove had not come; the wood had not come. There was not a blanket for the improvised beds. John Corkery had been there, — not drunk, as Bertha feared, — but cross beyond language. He had, very clearly, given to all parties a large bit of his mind. He had left them all crying, and had told them they might sleep on the floor for all him; that they had made their beds, such as they were, and that they might lie in them. For his part, he must be at the reading-room; that it was the busiest day in the year there, and that he

would not disappoint the managers for a minute, not to set up ten bedsteads. So he had turned, and gone away in a rage.

Bertha rose to the emergency. She was well aware that she had duties elsewhere. She knew also the hopelessness of getting anything done, in the ordinary methods, on the afternoon of Christmas. But she was indignant at John's cruelty; and she meant to make it good, and she did so. She fell back on the feudal system, which does work marvels when our modern proletariat breaks down. She did not actually wind a horn on the doorstep at the tenement in the house at Floyd Street, but she did what was substantially the same thing. She found the boy at the corner druggist's, — a boy who would have run his shoes off his feet for her father. She sent him here, she sent him there. She soon had Brian O'Donoghue and William Clary in her service. She had Aunt Nancy at the fore, who cared as little for Christmas as she did for Saint Tristram's Day; regarding them all as so much "Irish superstition." She told Aunt Nancy what was needed; and Aunt Nancy was very soon telling her. She saw the stove arrive, and in its place; and, when Aunt Nancy put a match in the kindlings, Bertha tore herself away, bade all good-bye, and walked up the street, to the corner where she had left the little pony-carriage and Puss. It was dark, but Bertha was not frightened. She knew she should be at home at seven.

Puss was not there! The street was silent and dead, as it can only be at midnight or on a Christmas evening.

Poor Bertha broke down. Had she been such an idiot that she had not fastened Puss? Or had somebody stolen the horse, and gone off on a spree, not knowing what he did? All that was to be learned sometime; but now Bertha Oelrich must walk home, and walk home alone.

There was the village at the locks to pass. She had noticed how noisy they were when she came. What a fool she was! Noisy or quiet, she must go home, and must tell her father she was a fool.

And Bertha was, oh, how tired! And however well her spirit and nerve had held her up while there was some success and achievement, and something still to do, there was no spirit left and no nerve, now that there was no achievement, no success; nothing but failure, and the stupidity of attempting something which she dared not ask leave for, to come home and say she had been all wrong. Every step was like lifting lead for the poor girl. There came over her the thought of the last night, when they had driven home all so jolly and happy. Was she the same girl, and was this the same world?

As she came to the village at the locks, she looked rather timidly to the bridge-corner, to see what might be waiting there: things looked better than she feared. Two men, closely wrapped, and of decidedly forbidding look, were on one side.

She could see their forms against the sky. But the other side, the coal-yard side, was clear, not even a wagon fastened there; and Bertha paddled across the street at the moment, that she might take that path, which had at least a roadway between it and these ominous foot-pads. She looked neither to right nor left. She walked as fast as she dared, without running. She came to the bridge, so that she was sure she was passing them. Her foot-fall on it was louder than it had been on the snow. In the moment she heard theirs. They, too, had crossed, they were behind her, they were coming the same way: should she run, should she stand still? She did neither, but walked rapidly on.

This could not last but a moment, she should fall on the ground. But perhaps they would turn off at the corner? Can I walk twenty steps more? And she counted them, — one, two, three, four; one, two, three.

"Miss Oelrich, Miss Oelrich, surely it is Miss Oelrich." It was George Ruther's voice that spoke. And Bertha just succeeded in not screaming, succeeded in not running away, and turned round, and managed to say, "Why, really, you frightened me."

"We ought not to have followed you," said Will Gadsden, who had given her his hand, and could feel how she was trembling. "But I felt sure it was your step, and — and we knew it was by some accident that you were walking."

Bertha then told, still holding out bravely, how her horse had run away, and that she did not dare stop to look for him. The young men proposed a dozen plans, but she would hear to none of them; for they all involved her waiting at one place or another, and she knew papa would be frightened out of his senses if tea-time came without her. Fortunate that tea was late that evening. No, she was quite reassured now, and she would walk home. And so they started. But in a moment Will Gadsden said he was sure he could find something at Bogg's in which he could carry Miss Bertha home. If they would go on slowly, he would beat up Bogg's quarters, and see. He left them, and they went on together.

Mr. Ruther asked some question further about the accident. But poor Bertha was not herself. She was too tired to say one word. She should not have been forced to do so.

"Oh, it was our poor friend, Corkery. He told you, did he not?"

"Told me! No, he told me nothing. Stay! I did not see him this morning. I looked in at the reading-room, and he was away. I wish I had known. Why did you not send for me? I am sure John is my property as much as yours!"

"Oh, dear! why do I always think that I must 'run the machine,' and then always find that it would do a great deal better if I never touched it? But, as far as that went, I do think it would have been absurd to break up your Christmas

holiday too. You have done quite enough for John Corkery."

George Ruther did not understand this hard, short way of speaking in Bertha. In the first place, he did not know how tired she was. In the second place, he did not know that women hold out unchanged to a certain point, and then all their fatigue and nervousness assert themselves at once, and they break right down. Men get tired slowly and by degrees. This was a distinction George Ruther did not then understand.

He plodded stupidly on. "Indeed, Miss Oelrich, it would only have been our part; and, though, of course, I know your plans have been better than mine would have been, — of course you know the neighborhood a great deal better than I, — still I was there, and you were not. I wish you had sent him to me."

"I do not know what your plans would have been," said Bertha, still as hard as Semiramis. "Mine were the worst plans that ever were made, and all broke down together. I found all my people sitting on the floor crying just now, and it is only Aunt Nancy who has put fire on their hearth or bread in their mouths. There's a pretty Christmas in a Christian land. And I, — that is what comes of being born in the purple and fed with a gold spoon, as one of the girls said I was, that I cannot so much as make four wretched women comfortable on the day our Lord was born!"

She was fairly angry now, and hardly knew whom she was talking to.

Now George Ruther, being but eight-and-twenty years of age, was as ignorant of the nature of woman as if Eve had never been launched into this world. He knew his mother, as he supposed; and he knew his little sister Jane. But for such a change in bearing and speech as came over poor Bertha, now that she was "dead beat," disappointed, tired, and all broken down, George Ruther was as utterly unprepared as he would have been to see her change into a white doe and disappear in the shrubbery.

He did not know what to say, and he did not know what to do. He felt more like crying than anything else; but, being a man, he thought he would not cry. For a minute they walked on in silence, and then he said what was uppermost, as he was, indeed, a little apt to,—

"I do not see why you say that, Miss Bertha. I never saw anybody who was as efficient as you are, or brought so much to pass. I am sure I have a right to say so."

"I wish you would not say such things, Mr. Ruther. I say them to myself a great deal too much, and they make me the vain, foolish goose that I am. A girl who knows better than her father, and knows better than her mother, and then has to leave William Clary and Aunt Nancy to do her work for her, has to see them do what she cannot begin to do, and then paddle home on

foot in the darkness and mud and snow," — and here Bertha viciously kicked a stubborn frozen clod out of her path, — "a girl who must go home and tell her father that she is a goose, and tell her mother that she is a fool, should not be told that she is very efficient." And she fairly sobbed in her vexation.

Ruther had admired this bright, merry, wide-awake child of good fortune, from the first moment that he saw her. She understood everything so readily at half a word, she joined in so precisely at the right moment, she had consecrated her life by the same principles that were the life of his, in everything she had seemed to him a wonder and a delight. But she never had seemed to him so charming as she did now, when she was all dejected and broken. He would have been glad to take the poor tired child in his arms, and carry her home to her mother, and ask leave to carry her so for ever and a day.

But such are not the customs of the nineteenth century.

So Ruther blundered on, as best he could, in the forms suggested by this century, which thinks it believes more in talk than in symbols.

"Well, who thinks he can do everything? You cannot put up a stove, and you are distressed because you have failed. But I do not believe that your father could put it up any better than you can. I am sure I am not distressed because I cannot dress the pulpit with flowers,

as you did this morning; or knit Bertie Joy his mittens, which you gave to him this morning."

"There it is," said Bertha, still on her "bender." "Knitting and flowers! That is just about what I am fit for, and what I ought to learn to be satisfied with."

Poor Ruther could have bitten his tongue out, to think that it should have served him in illustrations so futile. But it is of the nature of such a man as he to stick to the idea on which he has started, and to compel others at least to understand; and so he manfully persisted.

"Well, if you do not like that instance, take a dozen others. I am talking of the woman who bullied Krieshammer till she got the tassels he had promised; who audited nineteen several bills for furniture and carpets; who discovered the mistake in Worth's accounts, which nobody else had seen; the woman who was never one minute late in twenty meetings of the Executive Committee, whose records never were corrected, who never lost her temper when every one else was cross, and who made peace between all quarrelsome people, so that they forgot that they had quarrelled. I do not think it is fair for that woman to say that she is a cipher, and for one I will not stand it," said he, laughing, as if to excuse his earnestness.

Bertha herself was a little startled. Was it possible that anybody cared for her, and watched her so closely that he knew what Mr. Ruther was

saying of her, every syllable of which she knew in her own heart was true?

> "Perhaps, then first she understood
> Herself how wondrously endued."

She paused for a few seconds in her turn, and then said, as the great over-ruling genius of Modern Society dictated, —

"You are very kind, Mr. Ruther." She was frightened, and she did not dare trust herself to fight any longer, nor, indeed, to say one word more.

"I tell the truth," said Ruther, warmed and excited, and quite beyond the guard he had placed upon himself in all the walk until now, as in all their intercourse before. "I tell the truth. I have wondered and wondered, from day to day, where and how a person so tender and gentle as you, so accomplished and bright as you, so unselfish and considerate as you, so necessary in home life and so perfect in it, came to have this capacity for affairs which I never saw in any man, and the intuitive knowledge of character which comes to your help at every moment."

He was a little frightened now, but Bertha said no word. They walked on, and then he added: "I have said it. I have said more than I should have dared say, had not I been all overset and beside myself to see any one in distress and in tears who is so inexpressibly dear to me as you are. O Miss Bertha, I may well say this here,

where I have walked almost every day for the last two months, in the hope that I might at least touch my hat to you, or possibly meet you in walking; where there is not a corner of the road, but I associate it with you. I had rather say this here than anywhere, — say what you please to me." — "All right, old fellow!" This was the cry — not of Bertha, as the reader may suppose by accident, but of Will Gadsden arriving from behind with Dan Bogg's horse, in Dan Bogg's lumber-wagon. "All right! Bogg was only too gracious. See, Miss Bertha, there are two buffaloes for you to sit upon; and even a milking-stool for Mr. Ruther, if he drives."

Mr. Ruther could have choked Will Gadsden, though he loved him. But he lifted Bertha to the wheel and the rude seat; and her hand did not press his, fair reader, — no, nor linger in it one instant. It was a stone hand. She said something to Gadsden, — she did not know what, far less do I. Ruther made Gadsden sit at her side, mounted to the milk-stool as bidden, and drove as if he were in triumph to the avenue and to Mr. Oelrich's door.

Then Will Gadsden offered to lift Bertha down from the cart; and George Ruther stood at the horse's head, to be sure that he did not start. Bertha jumped lightly to the porch, gave her hand frankly to Will, and by this time was able to thank him. Then, with perfectly clear voice, she spoke into the darkness, —

"Fasten him by the chain, Mr. Ruther; and I will send Conrad, or somebody, to take him home. You must come in, — pray come in, Mr. Ruther! I shall never get through with papa, unless my two knights help me through."

George Ruther was under the lantern by this time. And, as he looked into her eyes, — all running over with tears as they were, — he saw all that any man had a right to ask, although she did not give him a hand nor say one word beside.

She left the two gentlemen to their own devices in the hall, and, for herself, ran up to her own room.

The two gentlemen introduced themselves into the drawing-room, and, in the crowd of frightened and uneasy cousins, Mrs. Oelrich did not, at the first moment, understand that they came with Bertha, — which, indeed, both of them had tact enough not to proclaim. To this moment she did not know that her daughter was out of the house. To say truth, Mrs. Oelrich was at this first moment not sorry to have allies so wide-awake and ready to assist in the entertainment of her Christmas party, which, as the reader has seen, had in it certain elements of friction, not to say of incongruity.

It did not at the instant occur to her that there was one additional element of incongruity introduced by Will Gadsden's arrival. Wanting to lighten up the evening, if she could, she had despatched Conrad with a note to Mrs. Claridge,

asking if some of them could not come over, and bidding Conrad wait and bring whoever would come. The summons had been answered by the arrival of Dr. Claridge, Aunt Lois, Susie, and myself, who write these words; and the bustle of our reception was but just over, and we were scattered with different cousins, all more or less taciturn or frightened, in the conservatory, in the billiard-room, or in the library, when the two young men entered, in manner as has been described.

I doubt if Mrs. Oelrich quailed when, after five minutes, it did occur to her that Will Gadsden and Susie Claridge might be glad not to be under the same roof. No, I am sure she did not quail. "It is their look-out," she said to Gustav, "and not mine. There are six rooms here; and, if they choose to run against each other, I certainly am not to blame. Let the feast go on!" And it went on, — with all the more vivacity for the incursion of these six new revellers.

When, half an hour afterwards, Bertha Oelrich came into the room at tea-time, she was radiantly beautiful. I had admired her afar off, ever since I came to college at Bromwich; but I had never seen her with the expression both of pride and tenderness, of power and of gentleness, which shone through her face and moved in every movement now. No, I do not know how she had dressed herself, — do not ask me! — but it was some dress of festival, which yet was a dress of

the fireside. She moved with the light-hearted step of a woman who is perfectly happy and perfectly at home. And yet her face was thoughtful, while it was glowing with life: you wondered what she was going to say, and yet she said hardly a word. I know I looked on with wonder, and I could see that her mother looked on with equal wonder, — and, shall I say, with pride unconcealed. Bertha gave her hand to such newcomers as were in the large drawing-room. George Ruther was not there. Then she attached herself to the most irresolute and terrified cousin of all, one of the kind whom I have spoken of as not even a cousin, and, beginning by showing him the pictures in a copy of "Punch" which had just come from the mail, soon had him laughing and talking about the blunders of his college life; and in ten minutes that little fool had persuaded himself that this matchless woman had fallen desperately in love with him.

Before long Mrs. Oelrich gathered a part of her forces in the large parlor, and seated them in a long irregular oval. They were to play at "Consequences." The machinery of the game was simply enough arranged; and a young cousin of fifteen, who had played it at the academy, and knew all about it, and whispered to her new friends things which would be very funny to write, had the collection of the papers and the reading aloud of the results. We were all good-natured, some of us were inspired. Every one

was under the glamour of Bertha's queenly good spirits. George Ruther was not in the room. He was explaining a cabinet of fossils to a cousin who was a little deaf, but was interested in natural history. Under the regular sequence of the game, we had all sorts of absurd complications; the young folks sitting in the inner row to hear the vaticinations which came forth from the half oracles which they had deposited in the sacred tripods. These tripods were in fact hats, brought in from the hall. At the last moment, a tall, shy gentleman from Bremen brought in Susie Claridge and placed her in a chair, behind which he stood. It was too late for her to see that Will Gadsden was directly opposite her. No matter if he were. Around the oval hovered a body of the older people, and gradually the laughter and surprise of the noisy game brought everybody into the room.

Well, we had the usual reverses of fortune: —

"General Butler" — *and* "Pocahontas" — *met* "in a balloon" — "at the foot of Gamaliel." *He said,* "Do you smoke?" *She said,* "Not much." *And the consequence was* "she became an archangel."

Of course we all laughed, and the children stamped; and Miss Gilbert, encouraged with the success of her game, went boldly on: —

"Jefferson Davis" — *and* "Rosa Bonheur" — *met* "in quod" — "at Antietam." *He said,* "I defy you in your teeth." *She said,* "Does your

mother know you're out?" *The consequence was* "they went where glory waits them."

New applause, new surprise at the aptness of the answers; and so the game went on through a dozen similar repartees, till some demon presiding over such chances ordered that, in drawing from the hats, Miss Gilbert — who did not know three people in the town by name, far less did she know the relations that bound one to another — read as loudly and freely as she had read the others: —

"Mr. William Gadsden" — *and* "Miss Susan Claridge" — *met* "in a grog-shop" — "by the side of the canal." *He said*, "I love you." *She said*, "I hate you." *And the consequence was* "he took strychnine and died."

Fortunately the younger boys and girls, as ignorant as Miss Gilbert, all screamed and clapped as before. Whether Will Gadsden's hair turned white I did not know. Whether Susie Claridge sank through the floor I did not know. I looked straight at the piano for an instant, and in one instant more we all sprang to our feet at a terrible smash. One of the great Japanese vases, which stood on a tripod behind Miss Clarke's chair, had fallen.

It is my belief, and will be till I die, that Gustav Oelrich himself kicked it over, to make the diversion which was so necessary. Anyway, his object was accomplished.

That night we "played consequences no more."

CHAPTER XV

TWO BY TWO

"WOULD you rather go home, my darling?" said Mrs. Claridge tenderly to Susie, in a side-room, after the company had broken into groups again. "It is very hot here."

"Oh, no! dear mamma, don't be anxious about me. I'll be all right in a minute. I will go into Bertha's room for a half an hour, and when I come down I will be as right as ever. Of course, — well, I should not have come if I had known he would be here; but such things must happen, and I may as well face them. But was anything ever quite so bad?" And the poor girl cried again, and ran away.

"Of course you know, my dear child," said Mrs. Oelrich to Mrs. Claridge, when she found her, "that when I sent for you I had no dream that he was to be here. You know how much he and Mr. Ruther are together, and they came in without a whisper of an invitation. I am so sorry."

In a moment more Will Gadsden was at her side. "Dear Mrs. Oelrich, of course you know that I did not know she was here. I have schooled myself to that quite too thoroughly to make a mistake now. I am so sorry I came! But now I will thank you for your hospitality and be gone

— as soon as I can find my hat!" — this almost quizzically, as he looked back into the broken oval.

"Thank you, my dear Will," — this with intention. "But, so far as I can think, I think you had better not go. There are six rooms here, and I will trust your tact. It will trouble the Doctor and all, if you go away." This she said almost eagerly.

"Just as you say," said he; and he called a stout boy, and engaged him at checkers in the billiard-room.

Susie did not take the half-hour she asked for in which to recover her balance. I was standing and talking with Mrs. Oelrich when the two girls entered the room together, and never shall I forget the impression they made on me. I did not know then all this that I have been telling you now, and I could not have explained what I saw. But here was Bertha radiantly beautiful, as I have said, thoughtful and cheerful, as if she were going to conquer the world, or see some one else conquer it. And Susie, if she had been crying, showed no signs of it. She was very pale, but very lovely, as to my eye she always was; and, though she was not touching Bertha, I believe any one who loved her as I did would have had the feeling that I had, that she was clinging to her for strength, and relying on her for the rest of the evening. I think she was.

And for a long time, indeed, the two girls

kept together. Perhaps they had bound themselves to do so. They stood by the fire together, they sang a duet together; they sat on the sofa together, riding on their feet some little girls who were begging not to be sent to bed. But of a sudden a servant beckoned to Bertha from the door, and she knew that she must run into the dining-room to take order about the supper, and ran out, leaving Susie alone.

Susie turned to a shy girl who was looking at engravings at the table by her side and asked her if she had been into the conservatory, and if she would not like to go there? The shy girl was glad to go anywhere where there would be no one to look at her. In the conservatory there was a specimen of *Barneveldtia verticillata,* which had taken this Christmas evening to show for the first time the glory of its magnificent blossom; and Susie gladly took her shy neighbor to see it. The little girl warmed under her kindness, and Susie herself was quite at ease with her again. They fell to talking about their luck with smilax and with ferns, and at last Susie dragged her round under the plant platforms into a dark little den there is, to show her how the gardener was striking some cuttings. Susie was just as much at home in every corner of that house as Bertha herself was.

When they reappeared in the conservatory, they came out upon a group who had been brought in to see the Barneveldtia. Next to Susie, as

she stepped out of the little door, was Will Gadsden, who had brought in Sarah Clarke, after taking the precaution to look in and to make certain that no one was there. Others had followed them, so that the little pathway in the greenhouse was crowded full.

"Is not it lovely, too lovely?" cried the gushing Miss Clarke to Susie. "How wonderfully those purple stamens bend down over the white! and do you see, Mr. Gadsden, that darling little cross in the middle? I never saw anything so lovely."

"I knew you would like it," said Will, bravely; "and now I will leave you with the ladies, and make my good-byes."

"So early, Mr. Gadsden?" said Susie Claridge. "I hope we don't frighten you away." And she put out her hand as frankly as Sarah Clarke could have done.

"Thank you, indeed," gasped Will, choking hard as he spoke. But Miss Clarke fortunately was again possessed by her guardian genius, and began an aria in prose on petioles and filaments and pores in the anthers, which flowed on as easily as some smooth river.

And Will did not go. Miss Clarke, if she thought of the reason, thought that her own eloquence had held him. In a moment more, however, she made a dash at the more distant part of the conservatory. "That is Fellowsia, I know it is Fellowsia, and the fructification on the

fronds is the most curious thing in the world." She rushed forward, followed by the train of ladies, for whose passage in the narrow pathway Will pressed back as best he could. The frightened girl without any known name, who was Susie's companion, was swept away in the throng; and Susie in the doorway, and Will pressed against an orange-tree, were left together to bring up the rear.

"Will you give me one word, Mr. Gadsden?"

"Will I?" said he; and with two steps he led her to the orchid-house, which at this season had no special attractions for the enthusiasts.

"I have been upstairs, resting in Bertha's room, since — since Mr. Oelrich broke his jar," said Susie, very pale, but trying to smile; "and I have had a chance to think a little. Still I should not have said anything, but that we happened to meet again here. And now, as we have met, I want to say this. We are not living in a book: we are living in Bromwich, which is a very small and very common-place town. If you must leave this conservatory because I am here, you must leave any other room that I happen to be in. We shall have scenes all the time, and very foolish scenes. Do not let us be such fools as that: we should only make each other uncomfortable; and that is the last thing that I want, and I am sure the last that you want. Can't we stand at ease, as I think you soldiers say?"

And she succeeded in keeping down her tears

even, she was so resolute, — yes, she succeeded in looking into his eyes, which were brimming and running over. Meanwhile, Miss Clarke led her train out through the further door into the billiard-room; and no one but the frightened girl without a name missed Susie or Will, — least of all Miss Clarke, who was instructing Mr. Hausmann about pollen.

"'At ease' is a good deal to say," said Will, trying to smile. "But I am quite a good actor, you know, of old," he added after a pause. "Whatever you think best, that I will do, or will try to do, as well as I can. It would be easier for me to leave town once for all, than to be dodging you from this drawing-room or that sidewalk."

"Oh, don't say that!" said Susie, more impulsively than she meant. And then, controlling herself: "Don't let an accident or a set of accidents interfere with studies, and a plan which you have carefully arranged. I can be as careful as you," she added with some pride, "and we shall not trouble each other often."

"Oh, don't say that!" cried he, a little off guard, but still using her own words with a tone that showed he used them. "We shall never trouble each other at all now — now that we understand each other," he added very sadly.

"We do not understand each other," said Susie, bravely, "unless we meet and part as friends. I believe that is what I set out to say, only I blundered."

She gave him both her hands, and he took them with a surprised and reverent courtesy, as if an image of the Madonna had stretched out its hand to him when he was on his knees in prayer.

"If you can say that," said he, "you do more for me than I knew that any man or woman could do when I came to see that flower. You do more for me than words can tell. This a Christmas present, indeed. And I shall always be grateful, Miss Claridge." And he dropped the cold hands, because he would not trust himself to say one word more.

Both of them were silent. After what had passed, neither could make a movement without this certain misapprehension. Perhaps neither of them wanted to say anything. But after a minute Will had a feeling of his own high chivalry, that he was bound now to address her as any other man would; and, with a distinct feeling that he must act his part of "friend" as well as he could, he thought up something to say, and said, "How beautiful Miss Oelrich is this evening!" It was a good cue to give, and in her heart Susie thanked him.

"Perfectly beautiful! It is wonderful to see her strength and spirit, for she has had a terribly hard day of it."

"Did she tell you—" Will began, and then he doubted whether he would speak of her little accident. He botched the sentence a little, and

said, "Did she tell you about her new Irish friends?"

"She did not, but Mrs. Oelrich did. Dear Bertha! if all Ireland appeared on the lawn to-morrow morning, they would all be comfortable in tents before night. She understands Mr. Ruther's maxim, and knows how to 'lend a hand.'"

If anything could put Susie at her ease, in a conversation which was so embarrassing, it was to talk of Bertha to some one who appreciated her. Will had not hit badly in choosing his subject.

"She knows how to 'lend a hand,'" said he, "because she forgets herself. 'She looks out, and not in.' That is another of their Wadsworth mottoes. And as anybody knows, who knows Ruther as well as I do, or knows Bertha as well as you do, this is for both of them, because they 'look up, and not down.'" And, as he spoke, he pointed into the drawing-room, where, after the loyal service of this eventful evening, Bertha and George were rewarded by being at last together; and where they could see that he was talking with all his might, and Bertha listening with all her heart, unconscious of everything around.

And Will Gadsden and Susie Claridge were both more at ease for the moment than they had thought they could ever be in each other's company. For the moment both of them stood silent, and enjoyed the consciousness of ease. Silence is golden, indeed, when it comes at such times and after such

storms. Nay, for the moment, neither of them was thinking of self.

"I believe we are both thinking of the same thing," said Susie, timidly, but fairly with a smile upon her face.

"Are we?" said he, and he started. "I do not dare tell you what I am thinking of. You will say I have no right."

"I am thinking of those two, — that it is a pleasure to see them together, and think of them together. Bertha is very strong, and she is very well-balanced; but she is not strong enough to be alone, and I like to see her with a friend so strong as he."

"Though I know him so well," said Will, "Bertha is the only person he never speaks of to me, except in the most casual way. And I believe he worships her as she passes him in the street." Then Will was frightened, for he knew that he would have said this to no living being but to Susie Claridge. And he was frightened to think he had dared say it to her.

"We must not talk of such friends," said she, smiling again, "if we cannot help match-making. But I cannot well tell you what a help Bertha has been to me, and is to all of us."

"It is an eclogue we are singing in," said Will; "for I cannot well tell you what a help Ruther has been to me and to all of us. He teaches me,— no, he does not teach me, that is the glory of it, — I believe he inspires me. If I am with him, I forget

all about myself, and am not torturing myself with questions. I do not feel my pulse. I do not inquire about my sins. I do not take credit for my smart speeches. I do not distress myself about my blunders. And I believe it is the same with the workmen down in the repair-shop. There is not a man of them but Ruther makes more manly; and there is not a man of them who would not die for him, as I would. O Miss Susie, it is everything for a poor dog who has lived such a life as I have, and dragged through as much dirt as I have grovelled through, to be honored by the confidence of such a man!"

Susie's eyes flashed fire. Was she inspired? Perhaps. Anyway, she did not mean to go round again in that same weary round with him. "Then there is one of his mottoes that you do not learn, Mr. Gadsden. You do not learn from him to '*look forward, and not back.*'"

"Susie!"

"If you did, Will, you would not come here and talk to me as if I were always remembering your past, and had no eye for your present. You would not meet my father as if he could not forget as well as forgive. You would not, Will, compel me to say what I am bold enough and wild enough to say now."

"O Susie!" he said again; and he tried to say something more, but she would not let him.

"No, Will," said she, "it is not you only who have been in a false position. Since the club last

night, I think my position has been harder than yours. For I have been living — you must hear me out — with all the disgrace and terror of an eavesdropper. I was behind the fire-screen in the club parlor when you were talking with Bertha; and, Will, I heard every syllable you said to her." And the poor, pale girl blushed fire, and looked in his face no longer, but hung her head, and looked upon the ground.

"Then you heard God's own truth for once," cried Will, "and I should be glad to publish it to all these people. I would not have dared say it — no, not for years — to you; but, now it is said, I say it again, and will say it again, as long as you will let me. And I will ask no answer; but, answer or no answer, I will love you, Miss Susie, I will honor you, and I will try to serve you till I die."

The girl looked up and looked down. She looked up again and looked down again. She looked up, and tried to speak, and her lips only trembled.

"I make you wretched," said he, "and you are trying to spare me misery."

"No," said the girl, bravely, "you do not make me wretched. I am trying to say that I am glad this veil is rent, and that you will take even as feeble help as mine for what is before you. What I wanted to say I said before: if you will 'look forward, and not backward,' I will."

"And I want to say — what I said once before to your mother — that if there is a saint this side heaven that saint is you."

"You must not say such things as that, till you know much more of saints and of me than you know now. And now you must not talk to me any longer: you must give me your arm, and take me out of this conservatory to go and speak to Bertha."

"Might we tell Miss Gilbert that we are friends?" said Will, fairly laughing now.

She gave him her arm, as proudly as a queen. They crossed to Bertha, who for once was so absorbed in what she was saying to George Ruther that she did not know they came up to her. But Will boldly touched her arm, and said, "Miss Bertha, we have come to say that Miss Susie tells me not to 'look back, but to look forward,' and that she is going to 'lend a hand.'"

Bertha's face blazed with light. "Am I relieved from my promise, Will?"

"You may tell her what you choose," said he. "I will have no secrets from her any longer."

"May I tell him, Bertha, that you have no secrets from me?" said George Ruther.

"After what you said to papa," said Bertha, laughing, "you may say anything to such children as these two are." And then, in presence of the whole company, of whom, at least, Miss Clarke and Miss Gilbert and I myself were looking on with some wonder at this excited talk and its dumb show, she threw her arms around poor dear Susie's neck, and kissed her and kissed her again and again.

"Christmas, indeed!"

CHAPTER XVI AND LAST

BROMWICH TO-DAY

Ah, well! This is all well-nigh nine years ago, as I write these words. Perhaps I need not have written so much of the joy and triumph of those young lives. But all four of these young people would say to you, if you went into Ruther's house or to Gadsden's, that all the history of the beginning of the New Crusade was mixed in with the history of their discovering each other. They would say that they could not tell the one part without the other, and so they would excuse me for telling it so. For them these have been bright years, indeed, — years of unselfish love, — years of happy homes, full of work for others and prayer for others, — years of light and life and success. Meanwhile this little Bromwich of ours has been going through one and another experiment in social life, all of which have ended in making us love this place as we love no other, and talking of it in ways that other people think absurd. When the Governor offered Will a seat on the Supreme Bench last spring, — and Will was only thirty-three, — Will thought, and Susie thought, that they could not move away from Bromwich. And when George took Bertha to Philadelphia for the winter, — it is now three years ago, — she said, and I believe, that she was homesick long

before they came home. She says, and I guess it is true, that we get more out of life than most groups of six thousand people do.

For the particular matter with which the Crusade began, it makes little difference to us whether the county vote for license, as it sometimes does, or whether it vote against it. With us the habit of "perpendicular drinking," to cite that convenient phrase again, is broken up. The college boys who have it when they come forget it; an occasional fast young clerk or machinist, who comes to Bromwich from Toledo or Cleveland or Pittsburg, either finds us too slow and leaves us, or gets interested in something which is going on, and forgets his old stimulus. Ruther and his set have been forever starting some scheme or another for amusing their Irish and French and German work-people, lifting up the level of their life, and making them look for something more than they used to. They had penny readings, where the Irish newspapers, and, in the war, the German accounts of victories, were read aloud night after night, in clouds of bad tobacco. They even consented to dances, where men and women brought back old memories, now of Connaught and now of Hanover, and were none the worse, perhaps, because for the moment it seemed as if they were at home. Out of their flower-shows, down at the reading-room, grew gardening such as we never dreamed of in Bromwich before; and your thorough gardener needs no stimulus nor amusement, but

his flowers. Before a great while they had a homestead club running; and now George tells me there is not a married man on the railroad payroll, nor in the Locks Village, nor at the tanneries at Faff's, but who owns his own cottage, with a quarter-acre, at least, of land. George laughs when he says it, and says Bertha might go fishing at midnight from the bridge-rail with nobody to terrify her, — that everybody else, indeed, not so romantic as she, would be a-bed.

For the Deritend Club, as I said, it is twice as large, in rooms and in numbers, as it was in those doubtful days of the opening. We try not to be aristocratic. None the less do we have that bad name. But we have done a good many democratic things. The public library is our thunder, as I said; the theatre and the three dramatic clubs came from us also; the tree-planting was ours, and the Horticultural Society. All the Lyceum courses rely on the "Deritend" to sell their tickets for them; and the cotillon-parties every winter, which are very democratic, are under our distinguished patronage. For all this, when Mike Mellen at last left the "Elephant," because he could not sell whiskey enough there to pay his rent, — after the house had been vacant twelve months, some of the carriage-builders and blacksmiths out in Front Street took the whole house, and opened it in opposition to the Deritend for a club-house. They called their club "The People's Club," and explained at much length that they were not going

to be exclusive as we were. They also abolished liquor, of course; there was one nuisance the less. They made some rules that we thought very strict, and they refused to make some which we think very necessary. All the same, they have flourished in their fashion, and we in ours, and all the more for a little healthy rivalry. To give them their due, they went right into clean politics, which we had been afraid of; and they blew the county "Ring" sky-high. They turned the Robbinses out, who had kept the county almshouse for ten or twelve centuries, and put in Martin and his wife. They voted a heavy tax on the property of the town for water, and brought down the death rate of the town from twenty-eight to twenty-two by bringing the water in. It is a harum-scarum, talkee-talkee sort of place, is the "People's Club;" but it must be owned that it takes, and that it has done a great deal of good in its way.

Meanwhile, there has been less quarrelling in Bromwich than in any place of its size I ever heard of. Every Monday morning I find all the ministers, the Irish priest included, in the club room. I rather think, if the truth were told, that the Union Revival was born there. I know the "Provident Society," which undertook to feed all the poor people, was; and that society lasted till the discovery that, except poor blind old Nydia Mœonides, after she lost her hearing, and had a stroke of "numb palsy," there were no poor people in the town.

Our whole history has been one illustration of the truth of Aunt Lois's dictum: that, in the social order of such a place as ours, the best men and women can do what just they choose, if they will only work together. She says that the men cannot do much alone, and that the women cannot do much alone. She says that both together they will not do much, unless they aim high. But, if they find out what they want, she says they can do what they want, if they will overcome evil with good. The success of "the Deritend" was in the substitution for the stimulus of bad liquor the stimulous of the highest and best society. The success of the "reading-room" and its adjuncts was in the bringing together of hard-working and hard-worked men and women, who had been taught to soak and smoke alone. The new life of the town has come, as the town has found out that "society" is possible whenever everybody will determine to give and take, and that the best society is possible whenever the seniors do not desert their posts, and leave social arrangements to boys and to girls.

The loyal resolve of everybody to live in the common life was the inspiration and the success of

THE NEW CRUSADE.

THE END

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